

**COUNCIL MEETING held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 7.30pm on 10 OCTOBER 2017**

Present: Councillor G Sell – Chairman  
Councillors A Anjum, G Barker, R Chambers, J Davey, P Davies, A Dean, P Fairhurst, T Farthing, M Foley, R Freeman, A Gerard, J Gordon, N Hargreaves, S Harris, E Hicks, S Howell, D Jones, G LeCount, P Lees, M Lemon, B Light, J Lodge, J Loughlin, A Mills, S Morris, E Oliver, V Ranger, H Rolfe, H Ryles and L Wells.

Officers in attendance:

D French (Chief Executive), R Dobson (Principal Democratic and Electoral Services Officer), R Harborough (Director of Public Services), S Pugh (Head of Legal Services), J Starr (Community Officer - Drugs and Alcohol) and A Webb (Director of Finance and Corporate Services).

Also present: Oliver Woor, Isabella Writtle and Charles Yallup.

C39

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Artus, Asker, S Barker, Felton, Goddard, Knight and Redfern.

The Chairman welcomed all those present. He said despite political disagreement, he encouraged all members to "play to the ball", and to adhere to an objective standard of debate in what was a public arena.

**PUBLIC SPEAKING**

Mr John Hockley made a statement, a summary of which is appended to these minutes.

In response to Mr Hockley, Councillor Ranger said Mr and Mrs Hockley had his full sympathy, although the responsibility for resolution of this problem lay with Essex County Council, and Veolia. He would give any support he could.

Councillor Rolfe also offered his sympathy and said he would arrange to visit Mr and Mrs Hockley's home, with Councillor Ranger.

C40

**MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2017 were received, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to the following amendments:

At Minute 32, paragraphs 22 and 23, to substitute Councillor Lodge's name instead of that of Councillor Loughlin, to read:

"Before the substantive motion was put to the vote there was further discussion during which Councillor *Lodge* made the point that *he* was strongly in favour of the project in principle but the report left a great deal to be desired. *He* asked whether, in the event the Army left Carver Barracks altogether, it would be possible to renegotiate the retention of community use.

Councillor *Lodge* then said the debate had given *him* further confidence in the project and *he* would support it."

At Minute C32, paragraph 6, to add after the sentence: "There would be an initial meeting tomorrow to clarify the heads of terms", the following words:

*"and paragraph 3 of the recommendation would be amended to state that delegation is given to the Director of Finance and Corporate Services and the Head of Legal, in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Partnerships and the Chair of Scrutiny, with Councillors Knight and Artus, to agree the terms of the grant."*

At Minute C33, in the penultimate paragraph, to add the words:

*"Councillor Gerard abstaining."*

C41

## **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman gave a report on his recent attendance at various civic events. He said he had spoken with many interesting people, whom he would not otherwise have had the opportunity to meet. He was aware of lively interest in issues surrounding local plans across the other local authorities he had visited.

The Chairman said he had attended a flag-raising ceremony, to recognise the immense contribution given by the 37,000 Merchant Navy personnel who had lost their lives in the Second World War. He had attended the Essex Heritage Trust at Stowe Marys, where the only aerodrome in Essex was situated, housing WW1 planes. He had attended the Jack Petchey Young People's achievements awards, as well as others such as the High Sheriff's Justice Service, and Maldon Garden Party.

Forthcoming events the Chairman said he wished to highlight were the Chairman's Carol Service in St John's Church in Stansted, on 5 December 2017; the civic dinner on 16 February 2018, at which a briefing on Chesterford Research Park would be given; and in March on a date to be arranged, an event at Saffron Walden Museum.

C42

## **REPORTS FROM THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

The Leader thanked the Chairman for his report, adding that he was flying the flag effectively for the district.

The Leader referred to significant items due to come to the meeting of Cabinet in October. The items included proposals to give £300,000 to Harlow College's training and skills resource at Stansted Airport, which would be the District's first tertiary education facility, about which it could be proud.

Further items coming forward included the policy on street naming and land West of Braintree, and the consultation on planning for the right homes in the right places. It was most councils' view that the Government should set out from the start how many houses were needed, rather than councils having to "second guess", and the Government had now expressed this intention as a formula. Whilst the model was not quite right, the Council was progressing its response to the consultation.

The Leader then said he had attended the Conservative Party Conference, where there had been a uniform feeling on housing that there was a national shortage, becoming a crisis. He spoke about the issues caused by the lack of housing. This council wanted to play a part in the Government's initiatives, and would be speaking to the Minister. It was disappointing therefore to find campaign material in his village vehemently opposing development, and he questioned this disconnect expressed by what was a caring community, between need and taking measures to address it.

The Leader reminded members Dr Hugh Ellis had given an informative and inspiring presentation to them on garden communities. It was beholden on members to get the message about inspiring development across to their communities. The Planning Policy Working Group would hear next week about the Regulation 18 consultation response.

Councillor Rolfe reminded members of the Local Strategic Partnership assembly taking place on 9 November, on the themes of loneliness and social isolation. He said depression was a leading cause of disability and ill health worldwide, and loneliness was a key factor. He was therefore delighted the assembly would focus on how to tackle loneliness.

The Chairman said he endorsed the Leader's comments. He represented the Council on the Uttlesford Community Transport Forum, which played an important part in supporting those who would otherwise face isolation, and he was aware of the significant role in combating loneliness played by the Day Centres.

Councillor Ranger then reported on his portfolio. He said the housing teams' multi agency trailer had been on the road, and updates were available on Facebook. Officers were supporting the West Essex Clinical Commissioning Group in its Winter Warmer advice, which included a hot meal and a booklet of information, for which he thanked Lucy Fish, the officer responsible.

Councillor Morris had approached him regarding a proposal to close the streets of Saffron Walden for a cycle race, the *Saffron Walden Grand Prix*, in August

2018. British Cycling were supporting the venture, and he encouraged Dunmow and Stansted to arrange similar events in their areas. Trim trails were being established and officers had surveyed three areas in the district, in conjunction with the Young Foundation, to find out whether people felt connected. On 15 October in Takeley an event was taking place, and he encouraged members to take the message to their town and parish councils to bring evidence of people who felt that all was not right in their world. The aim was to set up self-help groups. As the Council moved to provide new communities it should support a solution for existing families. Today was World Mental Health Day, and he implored all to look out for those slipping through the net.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Ranger for his report. On the subject of new ventures which provided opportunities for participation in activities locally, he said he had been made aware that a boxing gym had recently been established in Clavering.

C43

#### **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER, MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE AND CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES**

Councillor Loughlin said she wished to encourage people to have the flu jab, not only for their own benefit, but to avoid passing it on to those who might be more vulnerable.

Councillor Ranger said he endorsed this sentiment fully, although was himself suffering from symptoms following the injection.

Councillor Loughlin assured members there was no risk of catching flu from the inoculation, so any symptoms would be no more than unfortunate coincidence.

C44

#### **UTTLESFORD YOUTH COUNCIL**

At the Chairman's suggestion, the item on the Uttlesford Youth Council was heard next.

Councillor Lemon, in his capacity as Chairman of the Public Engagement Working Group, presented a report seeking the Council's agreement to fund the annual cost of the Youth Council, and to endorse its constitution. He said he was delighted to welcome Isabella Writtle, Charles Yallup and Oliver Woor to the meeting. With the permission of the Chairman, he invited them to address Council.

Isabella Writtle said the Youth Council was a great opportunity to represent the young people of the district. The Youth Council had at the moment had many different working groups, of which the most important to her were the Community and Mental Health working group, because they let young people know their existence was recognised and that they could join, and gave them power to say something about their lives. Mental health, as Councillor Rolfe had said, was a

leading problem for young people. The idea was to focus on what young people were struggling with, as if they could talk about it, that was ideal.

The Chairman thanked Isabella Writtle for her address. He said it took a bit of nerve for a young person to speak to a meeting of Full Council. He endorsed her concern about mental health, and added he was aware, as his son was now an undergraduate, of the extra investment universities were having to make in provision of more counselling services.

Councillor Lemon said the Uttlesford Youth Council were a vibrant group. They were picking subjects which were meaningful. The Youth Council had 22 members from five schools, and was looking to get members from other organisations. It had met seven times since March.

Councillor Lemon said the Youth Council's constitution currently provided for yearly elections, with the next one in November, but feedback was indicating that the interval between elections could change to two-yearly after November. If so, a further report would be brought to Council to recognise an amendment to the Youth Council's constitution. He proposed the motion.

Councillor Fairhurst seconded the motion.

The Leader said he fully endorsed the proposals. He asked what measures might be taken to reach beyond schools, but recognised the venture was an iterative exercise. He was happy to endorse the Youth Council's constitution.

The Chairman said he too felt it would be commendable to involve a spread of young people, not just those taking A levels.

Councillor Lemon said it was important to recognise too that the Youth Council was an independent council.

Councillor Gordon said in relation to including young people outside schools that in Takeley he was aware many children attended schools and clubs outside the district, in Hertfordshire.

Councillor Lemon said the Youth Council were aware of this factor, as part of their considerations.

Councillor Chambers asked Councillor Lemon, through the Chairman, and the Youth Council representatives, if, as the oldest member of the Council, he could come and listen to what the Youth Council were saying. He congratulated Isabella Writtle for speaking.

The Chairman said he echoed that request, and that if members of the Youth Council wished it, he would be happy to come to a meeting or event, to provide advice "from the back seat".

Councillor Lemon said he had been to meetings of the Youth Council, and whilst he knew the Youth Council would welcome members, he wished to make the

point that if councillors attended, they should not tell the young people what to do.

Councillor Light said she had been privileged to work with the Youth Council from the start. She had been impressed by the calibre of the young people, who had themselves formulated the Youth Council constitution. She asked the Chairman whether the other young representatives present could be invited to speak.

The Chairman acknowledged the point made earlier, that many young people in the district went to school elsewhere. He encouraged members to promote the Youth Council as a voice for young people, and would do so himself, as he was on the board of Foresthall School.

Charles Yallup addressed members. He thanked the Council for supporting young people in setting up a Youth Council, as he was thrilled to have been involved. Young people were keen to experiment with this forum. He felt honoured to have this opportunity to engage with the Council, and looked forward to working with members.

On being put the vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED to

- (a) agree to funding as set out in the Financial Implications;
- (b) endorse the Youth Council constitution as appended and to recognise it in the Uttlesford District Council constitution including to access to Council meetings.

C45

## **REVISED STATEMENT OF LICENSING ACT POLICY**

Councillor Chambers presented a recommendation from the Licensing and Environmental Health Committee to approve the adoption of the revised statement of Licensing Act policy. He said the policy was reviewed as required by law every five years, taking into account changes in legislation and guidance issues by the Secretary of State. The Committee had examined carefully the draft policy document, now before members, and had engaged in the required consultation for 12 weeks. He was disappointed to report that only one response had been received to that consultation. The Committee had written to thank the business which had responded. He proposed the motion, which was seconded by Councillor Gordon.

On being put to the vote, the motion was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED to adopt the proposed new Statement of Licensing Act Policy, to come into effect on 1 December 2017.

## REVISION TO THE CONSTITUTION: DEFINITION OF 'KEY DECISION'

Councillor Oliver presented a recommendation from the Governance, Audit and Performance Committee, on a proposed change to the Council's constitution, to provide a clearer definition of "key decision".

Councillor Oliver said discussion at a meeting of the Committee had highlighted consideration of the figures proposed in relation to financial value of decisions. In comparison to the benchmark figures set by other councils for the purpose of defining a key decision, the amounts proposed for the definition for this Council were higher. However, the information from officers indicated that the figures from other authorities had not been recently reviewed, and accordingly the Committee had been satisfied with the the figures proposed.

The Committee had also considered whether the figure relating to land value, of £500,000, was set at the right level, but had concluded this was appropriate, as it was not possible to buy land for less.

Councillor Oliver proposed the motion, which was seconded by Councillor Jones.

On being put to the vote, the motion was carried, with three abstentions.

RESOLVED that the Council amend the Constitution by replacing the current definition of a key decision with the definition set out below:

A "key decision" means a decision by or on behalf of the Leader or Cabinet (including decisions by officers acting under delegated powers) which meets one or more of the following conditions:

1. The decision is likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure or making savings in excess of £100,000, subject to the following:
  - Decisions on the acquisition or disposal of land or of an interest in land will be key decisions if their value exceeds £500,000.
  - The following are not key decisions:
    - Loans or borrowing decisions made in accordance with the Treasury Management Policy.
    - Decisions relating to the engagement of staff unless falling within paragraph 4.
    - Contract awards or renewals for vehicles, plant, machinery, goods, supplies and services where budget provision has been made and the award or renewal is within budget.
    - Contract awards where the decision to let the contract has already been treated as a key decision.
2. The decision is likely to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in Uttlesford.

3. The decision relates to the adoption or revision of plans and policies which would have a significant impact on the way in which the Council carries out its statutory functions.

4. The decision relates to consideration by the Cabinet of proposals which would have a significant impact on the provision of services to the public or on the operational management of the Council.

*In considering whether a decision is likely to be significant, a decision-maker will need to consider the strategic nature of the decision and whether the outcome will have an impact, for better or worse on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the Council to a significant number of people living or working in the locality affected.*

The meeting ended at 8.25pm.

## **Public Speaking**

### **Statement of Mr Hockley**

My wife and I live in front of the waste transfer station in Great Dunmow. There has been a foul odour since the site opened; one year ago Essex County Council investigated the smell, but the problem has continued. My wife and I want to retire, but the smell is so bad we can't bear to be in the house during the day. Will someone please tell us what we are supposed to do? Do we need to working until we die? We can't even have visitors whilst the dump is operating. We would appreciate someone coming to tell us what we should expect to happen in the future.