



**MINUTES of
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
2 APRIL 2019**

PRESENT

Chairman	Councillor R G Boyce MBE
Vice-Chairman	Councillor Mrs B D Harker
Councillors	E L Bamford, A T Cain, Mrs H E Elliott, J V Keyes, Miss M R Lewis, Mrs N G F Shaughnessy, B S Beale MBE and A S Fluker
Ex-Officio Non- Voting Member	Councillors B S Beale and A S Fluker
Substitute Councillor	Councillor S J Savage
In attendance	Councillors PGL Elliott and R Pratt

2006. CHAIRMAN'S NOTICES

The Chairman drew attention to the list of notices published on the back of the agenda.

2007. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTION

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors H M Bass, Miss A M Beale and Mrs M E Thompson.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 17, paragraph 9, Councillor S J Savage attended as a substitute for Councillor Miss A M Beale.

2008. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15 January 2019 be approved and confirmed.

Councillor S J Savage wished it noted that he abstained from approval as he was in attendance as a substitute for Councillor Miss A M Beale.

2009. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Councillor Mrs N G F Shaughnessy declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 9 – West Maldon Community Centre – Request to Construct Extension - as a member of the West Maldon Community Association Committee.

Councillor Miss Lewis declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 11- Memorial Benches and Legacy Schemes within Parks and Open Spaces - as she had recently purchased a memorial bench and as the Chairman of the Friends of Heybridge Cemetery.

Councillor Mrs B D Harker declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 11 - Memorial Benches and Legacy Schemes within Parks and Open Spaces - as the Secretary of the Friends of Heybridge Cemetery.

2010. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No requests had been received.

2011. CHAIRMAN'S GOOD NEWS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman informed the Committee that the Council had been awarded two grants one for improving public parks and one for improving high streets.

2012. VERBAL UPDATE ON THE ROUNDABOUT SPONSORSHIP SCHEME REPORT

The Director of Services Delivery advised Members that he had hoped to update them on this report. However, the Council was still awaiting the date for a meeting with Karl Raby, Technical Business Manager for Place Commissioning (Highways) to discuss the way forward and gain clarity around the allocation of sponsorship. He said that given the informal approaches had been unsuccessful thus far he would now formally write to Essex County Council (ECC) for clarification and will share the response with the Committee once received.

RESOLVED that the Director of Service Delivery write to the Technical Business Manager for Place Commissioning (Highways) requesting a response to the sponsorship allocation issue and circulate to Members once received.

2013. UPDATE REPORT ON DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT RELATED ISSUES

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Service Delivery, together with appendix 1, that provided a summary of the allocation and outcomes of the Council's Disabled Facilities Grant programme (DFG) for the previous year and provided feedback on proposals raised at the Community Services Meeting on the 28 August 2018 (Minute 372 RESOLVED refers).

The Chairman drew Members attention section 3.5 of the report containing the response to proposals raised previously by the Committee together with appendix 1 detailing updates on questions raised previously.

The Director of Resources addressing previous proposals and questions raised advised the Committee that the information had been collated by housing staff and other agencies. He hoped that the update was comprehensive and covered all salient points to date and asked if the Committee required any further assistance on this matter.

Councillor Miss Lewis, referring to the issue of assessment, said that this remained over complicated and drawn out. She informed the Committee that as a member of the Housing LIN Forum they had looked in-depth at the possibility of reducing the number of assessments that applicants had to undergo. A common assessment mechanism that fulfils all agency requirements was the ideal way forward to ensure that vulnerable people were supported in a timely fashion. The Chairman noted that this would be difficult, given the multi-agencies involved.

The Director of Service Delivery, in response, reiterated the Chairman's views and that the Council was not ultimately responsible. However, he said that if the Council could broker a meeting with said agencies to facilitate a more efficient approach then they would.

Concern was expressed at the county-wide versus local provision approach and that the Home from Hospital task and Finish Group and the Handyperson Task and Finish Group could potentially, with the appropriate funding, provide a local efficient service.

It was agreed that the scheme be delegated to the Commercial Manger to investigate the best model going forward and report back to the Committee on options for local delivery of services. A progress report would be submitted to the next meeting of this Committee.

RESOLVED

- (i) that Members note the key achievements from previous years;
- (ii) that Members receive and note the status of proposals outlined at the meeting in August 2018 and detailed in section 3.5.1 of the report: -

- i. *Approval to fund an apprentice surveyor – helping manage succession planning, improving capacity and resilience to meet longer term demands on the service;*

There is no current provision for an apprentice surveyor within the future model however this matter will be reviewed as part of the detailed design work which will be carried out over the summer of 2019 to ensure the Council is able to deliver its services effectively

- ii *Agreement to use some additional funding to contribute towards the cost of a 'home from hospital' scheme, linked with Community Led Housing, helping local housing associations provide dedicated facilities to enable local people to leave hospital sooner, move closer to family and undertake a programme of reablement;*

Negotiations are on-going in connection with the Community Led Housing Project regarding a re-ablement programme.

A Home from Hospital Task and Finish Group and a Handyperson Task and Finish Group has been set up. MDC Officers are part of both groups. These Groups have identified the need for a Countywide Handyperson Service with particular focus being given to minor works, (such as key safe and level thresholds etc.) These works are often required to prevent delayed discharge and enable safe efficient return home from hospital. This service should also reduce/prevent hospital admission and promote an individual's independence. Continued work is ongoing to establish how this can be achieved, focussing on the feasibility of each Authority contributing towards a Handyperson Service to undertake these minor works.

Both Groups need to do further work to ensure an effective service is provided avoiding duplication of the current Essex Carers and Care Support Services (ECL) contract.

- iii *Explore the potential to create a local home improvement agency type service, providing practical help, support and advice to older people and those with disabilities so that they can continue to live independently in their homes;*

The Home Improvement Team is providing an Informal Home Improvement Agency type service which generates substantial income from fees. The Team is in an excellent position as part of the Housing Team to be informed of properties that are to be advertised on Choice Based Letting before the advertisement is placed. The Team is continuing to facilitate relocations to previously adapted properties therefore making better use of housing stock as required by the Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy. Local knowledge within the team coupled with the fact that two of the team are former Home Improvement Agency (HIA) staff, allow positive discussion with clients at the initial visit stage. The recommendations provided by the Occupational Therapist are reviewed and early identification made where these works are not practicable to undertake in the property. The possibility of moving is then discussed at the outset, thus avoiding unnecessary delays in meeting the client's needs.

The Team works very closely with all Housing Associations across the Maldon District securing contributions for works to be undertaken at these Housing Association's properties. Advice and assistance are given regarding Attendance Allowance, which is a much-underutilised allowance for older people, the additional income achieved as a result of this assistance allows vulnerable residents to employ people to assist them with various tasks (such as handyperson) which are beyond their capability thus reducing the risk of slips, trips and falls and subsequent hospitalisation. This matter will be kept under review.

- iv *Begin discussions with mid Essex Occupational Therapist Services (OTs) to consider the possibility of dedicated OTs to improve service and other opportunities for those who may need adaptations.*

Discussions have been completed, Countywide, regarding the provision of an in-house Occupational Therapist (OT). An agreement has been completed for Maldon District Council, Braintree District Council and Chelmsford City Council to share an in-house OT. The use of this service is based upon the number of recommendations received. Chelmsford and Braintree will utilise the OT for two days and Maldon for one day. MDC contribution towards this is pro-rata and funded from Maldon's Better Care Funding allocation.

In conjunction with the OT, Council Officers will be looking to develop a pathway from hospital/hospice to home and will also be on hand to discuss any general queries we may have regarding recommendations.

- (iii) that the Commercial Manager investigate the best model for local service delivery of the Disabled Facilities Grants Programme and report back to this Committee on progress.

2014. WEST MALDON COMMUNITY CENTRE - REQUEST TO CONSTRUCT EXTENSION

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Service Delivery, together with associated appendices, that informed Members of a communication received from West Maldon Community Association (WMCA). This was a request that the Council, as landlord, to support a planning application to be submitted by WMCA to construct an extension to the Community Centre.

A discussion ensued regarding the recommendation in the report and concern was expressed that this could be seen as a planning application. The Chairman exercised his discretion as Chairman to invite Mr David Campbell, the Vice-Chairman of the WMCA, to clarify the purpose of the request. He confirmed that this was a request in principle, for an extension prior to investing in an expensive planning application process.

The Committee suggested a change in the wording of the recommendation to replace 'this request' with "the principle".

The Chairman put the recommendation that Maldon District Council supports the principle to extend the Community Centre, subject to West Maldon Community Association (WMCA) obtaining all necessary consents to the Committee and this was agreed.

RESOLVED that Maldon District Council supported the principle to extend the Community Centre, subject to West Maldon Community Association (WMCA) obtaining all necessary consents.

2015. UPDATE ON THE RESOURCES AND WASTE STRATEGY INCLUDING RECENTLY PUBLISHED CONSULTATIONS

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Service Delivery that updated Members on the Resources & Waste Strategy and the recent published consultations with key milestones detailed at appendix 1. The report sought Members approval for the Director of Service Delivery to draft and submit responses to the consultations on behalf of the Council.

The Chairman brought to the Committee's attention the highlights of the report, the milestones involved together with the issue of introducing free green waste collections. It was noted that this was a shared concern across a number of Local Authorities in Essex due to the success of the chargeable schemes.

The Director of Service Delivery, addressing the issue of free green waste collection, said that the Council had already identified that over 58% of other Local Authorities were in the same position, operating very successful chargeable green waste collections and all were concerned at how the Government would deal with this going forwards. The Council would be making representations on this together with looking at ways of how the Council dealt with future policies on waste collection.

A concern was raised regarding fly-tipping of household construction waste. The Director of Service, in response, said that if necessary he would raise this as a separate concern with Essex County Council.

With reference to the recommendation he said that this was a purely practical issue of being in a position to draft the recommendation within the timeline on behalf of the Council.

The Chairman put the recommendation to the Committee and this was agreed.

RESOLVED that the Director of Service Delivery draft and submit responses to the consultations, either individually or jointly with members of the Essex Waste Partnership Board, as required on behalf of the Council.

2016. MEMORIAL BENCHES AND LEGACY SCHEMES WITHIN PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Service Delivery that updated the Committee on considerations in respect of the Memorial Bench scheme and alternative 'Legacy Scheme' proposals within Parks & Open Spaces. Attached to the report were appendices detailing illustrative photographs and examples of memorial projects.

The Director of Service Delivery introduced the report and advised Members that the proposed approach was largely to manage the scheme by backfilling into the existing provision, rather than create new locations. He then took the Committee through the examples of projects provided in the appendices.

Concerns were raised around the current policy for purchasing a bench. It was noted that it lacked clarity around individual responsibility, length of lease, when ownership/responsibility reverted and whether benches could be removed.

The City of London Cemetery was cited as an excellent example of good practice in terms of its policy. This comprised an agreed purchase price for a bench, maintained by the City of London Cemetery for an agreed number of years, after that agreed period a maintenance fee was levied and if not paid, the bench reverted to the cemetery. In addition, the cemetery was now looking into the use of reclaimable bench material going forward.

In light of the aforementioned concerns the Chairman proposed that recommendation (i) be referred back for a separate report on the policy, to include clarification for those with existing benches and feedback from Friends of Heybridge Cemetery and the National Federation, as appropriate.

The Chairman put the recommendations, including the revised recommendation (i), to the Committee and they were agreed.

RESOLVED

- (i) that Members agreed this recommendation be referred back to officers for a separate report on the policy;
- (ii) that Members agreed a draft 'best practice' model for creation, processes, and functions of a Legacy Fund be prepared and returned to Committee for discussion by December 2019.
- (iii) that Members agreed a list of potential projects for application to a Legacy Fund scheme be developed, with details to include indications where they 'fit' with existing policy or need, financial costs/scale and deliverability, and indicative locations (including designs) be drafted for consideration.

2017. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Chairman put the proposal that under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, and that this satisfies the public interest test, to the Committee and this was supported.

RESOLVED that under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, and that this satisfies the public interest test.

2018. MARKET UPDATE

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Service Delivery that updated Members on the work of the tendering process in relation to the Maldon (Thursday and Saturday) and the Burnham-on-Crouch (Tuesday) town market.

The Director of Service Delivery took the Committee through the report and the tender options outlined for both Maldon and Burnham-on-Crouch Town markets.

A discussion ensued around the various options and which would be most beneficial in each location. The Committee conclude that option (i) in each instance would best benefit the respective areas.

The Chairman put the proposal to the Committee that option (i) for both Maldon and Burnham-on-Crouch Town markets be adopted and this was agreed.

RESOLVED

Maldon Town Market

- (i) that Members accept and agree the tender for Maldon Town Market for 1 year and investigate alternative proposals for future provision; and,

Burnham-on-Crouch Town Market

- (i) that Members accept and agree the tender for Burnham-on-Crouch Town Market for 5 years.

There being no further items of business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45 pm.

R G BOYCE MBE
CHAIRMAN