MINUTES of
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
14 JULY 2015

PRESENT

Chairman  Councillor R Pratt
Councillors  A T Cain, M F L Durham, I E Dobson, J V Keyes, N R Pudney and Miss S White
Ex-officio non-voting Member  Councillor B S Beale MBE

1. CHAIRMAN’S NOTICES

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

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received Councillors Miss A M Beale, Mrs B D Harker, M S Heard and Miss M R Lewis.

3. MINUTES – 2 JUNE 2015

RESOLVED

(i)  that the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 2 June 2015 be received.

Minute No. 93 – Cemeteries Service Policy Update

Councillor B S Beale MBE raised that it had been agreed for the Officer to look into the possibility of a crematorium in the District and that this should have been included in the resolution. The Chairman therefore asked for a resolution to be added as follows:

(iv)  that Officers report back to a future meeting of this Committee with findings on the possibility of a crematorium in the Maldon District.

RESOLVED

(ii)  that subject to the above addition the Minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 2 June 2015, be approved and confirmed.
4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were none.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No requests had been received.

6. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN'S GOOD NEWS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman referred to the following items:

- Essex Football Association Recognition - The Essex FA have recognised the significant contribution made to grass roots football by Maldon District Council coach Simon Walker. He has been awarded a ticket to the FA Community Shield Match in August between Chelsea and Arsenal.

- Beach Huts - They are now operational and advanced bookings are coming in.

- Armed Forces Day - The Council and the Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome worked together to hold another successful Armed forces day in June. The event was attended by approximately 2,000 people, raising several thousand pounds for local charities. One of the highlights of the day was the flypast from a WW2 Spitfire.

- Maldon Car Show - Despite the weather in the morning the Maldon Car Show was very well supported event with 1,000s enjoying a real mixture of vintage cars from all decades and watching dancing to 50s and 60s music by the lake.

- Leisure Centre Open - The majority of refurbishments at that Blackwater Leisure Centre have now been completed and the facilities are open to the public. A formal launch is being organised and a date for that imminent.

- Terry Rampling - One of the longest serving members of staff, a gardener in park, retired last Friday. Terry worked within the Promenade Park for 43 years and it would be hard to find a more committed member of staff. The recently restored grotto area has been dedicated to him in recognition of his dedication.

- District Sports Day - On Tuesday 30 June and Thursday 2 July 2015, approximately 500 children from primary schools in Maldon and South Woodham Ferrers took part in the annual District Sports. On Tuesday evening field events of high jump, long jump and throwing took place, and on Thursday afternoon children competed in various track events including 600m, sprints and relays.
Splash Park - The splash Park opened earlier than previous years this year and over 11,000 visitors have come through the gates since we opened in May. The busiest day so far was last Saturday when 1,324 people enjoyed the facilities.

7. **THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE**

The Committee received a presentation from the Director of Customers and Community on the role of the Community Services Committee.

The presentation highlighted some of the content of Section 9 of the Council Yearbook relating to the Community Services Committee. Attention was paid to the function areas of the Committee and the Terms of Reference.

8. **DOG WATCH SCHEME**

The Committee received a presentation from the Senior Park Ranger on the Essex Police Dog Watch Scheme, which was co-ordinated by the Essex Watch Liaison Officer in partnership with Maldon District Council and countywide dog organisations. It was reported that to date 41 members from Maldon and 53 members from Burnham-on-Crouch had signed up.

The presentation further highlighted the work of the Park Ranger Service in the District. This included their work with the parishes, enforcement matters, the Community Parkwatch, Youth Bootcamp and the Crucial Crew workshop.

In response to a question, the Officer confirmed that they attended Parish Council meetings when requested and provided regular reports to the Parish Clerks on any matters of importance in those areas.

In response to a suggestion made, the Director of Customers and Community confirmed he would look into any future commercial opportunities for the Park Ranger Service.

The Chairman thanked the Officer for his presentation and commended the work of the Park Rangers.

9. **LEISURE CONTRACT UPDATE**

The Committee received the report of the Director of Customers and Community updating Members on progress relating to the new Leisure Management Contract and the refurbishment works to the Blackwater Leisure Centre and Dengie Hundred Sports Centre.

The report detailed the work carried out at the Council’s Leisure Centres and confirmed that the refurbishment programme of the sites were nearing completion in accordance with the programme provided by Places for People.
It was reported that an official opening of both leisure centres was hoped to take place in late July or early August.

In response to a question raised, the Leisure and Community Team Leader confirmed that Places for People (PfP) had a full marketing campaign to promote the refurbished facilities at the Council’s Leisure Centres.

RESOLVED that the progress of the Leisure Contract be noted.

10. VETERANS PORTAL (VIP TREE)

The Committee received the report of the Director of Customers and Community updating Members on the development of a web portal providing information for veterans of the Armed Forces.

The report provided details of the new pioneering website which was intended to be a one stop shop for veterans in Essex. The launch of the information portal, known as the VIP Tree www.theviptree.co.uk was designed to support the independence of Armed Forces Veterans.

RESOLVED

(i) that Members note the report on the Veterans Information Portal (VIP Tree); and

(ii) that a future report is brought back to Members to consider options for additional help and discounts that Council may be able to offer to Veterans.

11. CEMETERIES SERVICES POLICY UPDATE

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Customers and Community updating Members on the Cemeteries Services developments and to establish a Task and Finish Group for extending the Maldon Cemetery.

The report provided a background into the cemetery services provided in Maldon, Heybridge and Burnham-on-Crouch. It was reported that at the Community Services Committee on 2 June 2015 it was agreed that:

- That the Committee confirms that it wishes to continue the practice of providing burial space in Maldon, Heybridge & Burnham.

- That the Community Services Committee preferred option is to extend the Maldon Cemetery on the Western side of the Cemetery.

- That Officers report back to a future Committee on options for the extension.
The report suggested that a Task and Finish Group comprising of both Members and Officers could be established to explore the extension, consider options, produce a feasibility study of a Crematorium and report back to the Community Services Committee. Appendix 1 to the report set out the suggested Terms of Reference.

The Committee agreed on three Members to be appointed to the Task and Finish Group, these were Councillors M F L Durham, R Pratt and N R Pudney.

**RESOLVED**

i) that a Task and Finish Group consisting of Members and Officers established to oversee the project be approved;

ii) that Councillors M F L Durham, R Pratt and N R Pudney be appointed from this Committee to the Task and Finish Group; and

iii) that the draft Terms of Reference set out in **APPENDIX 1** be agreed.

12. **WAGTAIL DRIVE HEYBRIDGE FLOOD MITIGATION PROJECT**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services providing Members with details of additional partnership funding which had been secured to facilitate an improved flood alleviation scheme at Wagtail Drive / Drapers Farm, Heybridge.

The report sought Members approval for the revised scheme and engineering works on Council owned leisure land and approval for Essex County Council to undertake works on an ordinary watercourse.

The report reminded Members that in January 2015 a report was considered by Community Services, Planning and Licensing and Finance and Corporate Services Committee regarding a one-off £50,000 matched funded grant opportunity to support flood risk management through highway and ditch maintenance. It was agreed by Members that the flood alleviation scheme for Wagtail Drive, Heybridge be considered a priority and that the Essex County Council offer funding be matched with a supplementary estimate of £50,000.

Appendix 1 to the report indicated the location of an upstream storage area in Drapers Farm playing fields, which were the proposed works to mitigate flooding from the open channel at the end of back gardens between Wagtail Drive, Coopers Avenue and Limbourne Avenue.

In response to a question raised, the Environmental Health and Licensing Manager confirmed that consultation with the local sports club and residents had taken place. Further widespread consultation was planned. He added that provided planning permission went through in a timely manner the work was hoped to commence in January / February 2016.
RESOLVED

To the Community Services, Planning & Licensing and Finance & Corporate Committees

(i) that the proposal to work in partnership to deliver a more comprehensive flood protection scheme for properties affected by the Wagtail Drive ditch than previously agreed be noted.

To the Community Services Committee:

(ii) that subject to planning permission being obtained, to works being undertaken by Essex County Council, on behalf of Maldon District Council and other partners, on leisure land at Drapers Farm to provide upstream surface water storage for flood protection, be agreed.

(iii) that the right conferred on the Council as a Flood Risk Authority by the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 to carry out work on an ordinary watercourse be waived in favour of Essex County Council carrying out the works under their powers as lead Local Flood Authority.

13. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, and that this satisfies the public interest test.

14. COMMISSIONING OF ADVICE SERVICES FROM APRIL 2016

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Customers and Community seeking Member approval for the service specification which would be used to commission advice services from April 2016.

The report provided a background on the commissioning of advice services which was approved by this Committee on 15 July 2014. Appendix 1 to the report was the Service Specification which required approval in order for the formal commissioning process to begin.

In the discussion that followed the Committee was made aware of the work carried out by officers to compile the Service Specification.

Councillor A T Cain proposed that the Service Specification be reworked and then resubmitted to the Community Services Committee for approval. This was duly seconded and upon a vote taken not carried.
RESOLVED that the Advice Commissioning Service Specification at Appendix 1 be approved.

There being no further items of business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9:07pm.

R PRATT
CHAIRMAN
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