

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCIL MINUTES

Committee: Council **Date:** 30 October 2007

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 7.30 - 9.05 pm

Members Present: Councillors Mrs C Pond (Chairman), J Knapman (Vice-Chairman), K Angold-Stephens, R Bassett, Mrs P Brooks, K Chana, Mrs S Clapp, R Church, M Cohen, M Colling, Mrs D Collins, R D'Souza, T Frankland, P Gode, A Green, Mrs A Grigg, Mrs A Haigh, Mrs H Harding, J Hart, Ms J Hedges, P House, D Jacobs, D Kelly, Mrs J Lea, J Markham, Mrs M McEwen, P McMillan, R Morgan, S Murray, G Pritchard, Mrs P Richardson, T Richardson, B Rolfe, Mrs P K Rush, Mrs M Sartin, B Sandler, Mrs P Smith, P Spencer, D Stallan, P Turpin, Mrs L Wagland, A Watts, C Whitbread, Mrs J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse and J Wyatt

Apologies: Councillors D Bateman, Mrs A Cooper, J Demetriou, R Frankel, Mrs R Gadsby, R Law, A Lee, G Mohindra, Ms S Stavrou, Mrs E Webster and M Woollard

Officers Present: P Haywood (Chief Executive), D Macnab (Deputy Chief Executive), I Willett (Assistant to the Chief Executive), G Lunnun (Democratic Services Manager), G J Woodhall (Democratic Services Officer), M Jenkins (Democratic Services Assistant), T Carne (Public Relations and Marketing Officer) and R Palmer (Director of Finance and ICT)

64. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meetings held on 24 July 2007 and 25 September 2007 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

65. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(a) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor D Kelly declared a personal interest in agenda item 12(c) (Emergency and Urgent Expenditure - Damage to Roadway - North Weald Airfield) by virtue of being a member of the Essex County Scout Council. The Councillor had determined that his interest was prejudicial and that he would leave the meeting for the consideration of and voting on this matter.

66. ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) Chairman's Announcements

(i) Masons Close, Waltham Abbey - Scheme for People with Physical Disabilities

The Chairman reported on her attendance at the official opening of this supported housing scheme on 16 October 2007.

(ii) Playground, Station Green, Chigwell

The Chairman reported on her attendance at the opening of the refurbished playground on 26 October 2007. She advised that the playground was provided by the Chigwell Parish Council and the refurbishment had been undertaken with the assistance of a contribution from the District Council.

(iii) Staff - Celebrating Success Event

The Chairman announced that on 19 October 2007 she had presented certificates to staff who had completed qualifications.

(iv) 50 Favourite Trees Exhibition

Members were encouraged to attend an exhibition of the District's 50 Favourite Trees being held at the Epping Forest District Museum from 3 November 2007 until 8 January 2008.

(v) Chairman's Charity

The Chairman advised that to date approximately £5,500 had been raised for her charity. She expressed thanks to those involved in the organisation of and those taking part in the recent Business Golf Day.

(vi) Flowers

The Chairman announced that the floral display from tonight's meeting would be sent to St Clare Hospice, Hastingwood.

(b) Leader's Announcements**(i) Meeting with local Members of Parliament and local County Councillors**

The Leader reported that a meeting had been held on 26 October 2007 between Cabinet Members, local Members of Parliament and local County Councillors. She advised that there had been useful discussions on a number of topics including the Essex Strategy and Local Area Agreement 2. Members noted that as part of the process of developing the LAA it would be necessary to produce a "story of place" for the District. This would list the most important quality of life issues for the District, problems which needed resolving and which social groups, communities or sectors had particularly strong needs. Members were advised that the main issue to be raised in respect of this District concerned youth problems and a record of failure among some of the local secondary schools.

(ii) Loughton Town Council

The Leader advised that she had recently attended a meeting with Loughton Town Councillors in order to discuss matters of mutual concern.

(iii) Harlow and Uttlesford District Councils

The Leader advised that she would be meeting representatives of Harlow and Uttlesford next month in an attempt to establish a working relationship on matters of interest.

(c) Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder's Announcement

(i) The Broadway, Loughton Regeneration

Councillor Mrs A Grigg reported that following the receipt of tenders, Urban Practitioners had been appointed as consultants for this scheme.

(d) Housing Services Charter Mark Award

The Chairman presented a Charter Mark Award for Customer Service Excellence to Councillor D Stallan, Housing Portfolio Holder, A Hall, Director of Housing, and R Wilson, Assistant Head of Housing Services following the retaining of this award.

The Chairman advised that in order to retain the Charter Mark it had been necessary for Housing Services to meet six main criteria. High levels of customer services had been demonstrated in all areas and it had been necessary to meet 63 different requirements in order to qualify for the award. She advised that the Charter Mark gave confidence to the Council's clients that the Housing Directorate provided a customer focussed service and strived to continuously improve.

(e) Member Computer Training - Award of Certificates

The Chairman handed certificates to members who had completed recent IT training.

67. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)

No public questions had been received for consideration at the meeting.

68. REPORTS FROM THE LEADER, CHAIRMAN OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

The Council received reports (circulated) from the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Community Wellbeing Portfolio Holder, the Environmental Protection Portfolio Holder, the Housing Portfolio Holder, the Leisure and Young People Portfolio Holder and the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder.

69. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS WITHOUT NOTICE

(a) Blunts Farm, Theydon Bois

By Councillor P Turpin to Councillor Mrs A Grigg, Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder

There are signs stating that this site is dangerous. Can the Portfolio Holder advise if this is correct, and if so, who is liable for any accidents?

Response by Councillor Mrs A Grigg, Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder.

I think those of you who have visited the site would agree that it is dangerous. As to liability I will need to take legal advice on that matter and I will reply to you in writing.

(b) Handyvan Scheme**By Councillor Mrs J H Whitehouse to the Leader of the Council (in the absence of the Community Wellbeing Portfolio Holder)**

The report of the Portfolio Holder on the Handyvan Scheme suggests that it is only available to Council tenants. Can the Leader of the Council confirm that this scheme is available to all residents of the District.

Response by Councillor Mrs D Collins, Leader of the Council

I confirm that the scheme is provided for all residents and that we will be looking to enhance the scheme as part of the current Senior Management Restructuring.

(c) Fireworks**By Councillor S Murray to Councillor Mrs D Collins, Leader of the Council (in the absence of the Community Wellbeing Portfolio Holder)**

Bearing in mind that the ward I represent is currently suffering considerable disruption from fireworks and taking account of the fact that a major outlet for fireworks has recently opened in Loughton, can the Leader of the Council give me an assurance that the steps set out in the report of the Community Wellbeing Portfolio Holder are the very least which this Council will be taking in order to curb such disruption.

Response by Councillor Mrs D Collins, Leader of the Council.

I share your concerns and I shall be raising this issue at a meeting with officers tomorrow. I am aware that the Council's ASBO Co-ordinator has been particularly proactive in attempting to prevent sales to children and reducing anti-social behaviour associated with fireworks. We are concerned to do all we can to avoid accidents and it is unfortunate that this year there does not seem to have been so much checking on imported fireworks as has been the case in past years.

(d) Activities in Forest Car Parks in Theydon Bois**By Councillor T Frankland to Councillor Mrs D Collins, Leader of the Council (in the absence of the Community Wellbeing Portfolio Holder).**

What action is the Council taking in order to assist the Corporation of London and the Police to prevent activities in the forest car parks in Theydon Bois which have recently been reported in the local newspaper.

Response by Councillor Mrs D Collins, Leader of the Council.

This is another matter which I will discuss with officers at the meeting tomorrow. Although the Council has no direct responsibility I will ask officers to liaise with the Police with a view to more action being taken.

(e) Limes Farm Estate – Anti-social Behaviour**By Councillor K Chana to Councillor D Stallan, Housing Portfolio Holder.**

It is an essential role of the District Council to tackle anti-social behaviour and to seek to improve the quality of life for its residents. Despite steps which have been taken to

date, tenants on the Limes Farm Estate are still suffering from anti-social behaviour and many feel unsafe in their homes. If the Police have inadequate resources to deal with these problems is there anything that the Council as housing authority can do to assist its tenants in eradicating this problem.

Response by Councillor D Stallan, Housing Portfolio Holder.

I am aware of some of the problems. If tenants can draw attention to specific matters I will liaise with the Housing Officers in order to establish whether steps can be taken to improve the situation. I am also happy to work with the Community Wellbeing Portfolio Holder in order to address anti-social problems on the estate.

(f) Bus Stops in The Broadway, Loughton

By Councillor K Angold-Stephens to Councillor A Green, Civil Engineering and Maintenance Portfolio Holder

One of the unintended consequences of the car park/road improvements in the vicinity of The Broadway has been to deny buses parking on the forecourt of the garages in Burton Road. As a result some routes now start at Vere Road which is at the opposite end of The Broadway where there is no shelter, the area is unlit and residents are vulnerable when waiting for buses. It is no longer possible to wait at a single stop to get the first available bus to Loughton High Road and the changes which have been made are clearly detrimental to the residents. The bus companies are aware of the situation and are sympathetic but state that they have no choice. What does the Portfolio Holder intend to do to remedy the situation and will he consider granting a wayleave to allow buses with drivers on board to revert to waiting in Burton Road.

By leave of the Council, Councillor Mrs D Collins, Leader of the Council advised that she would respond to this question.

Response by Councillor Mrs D Collins, Leader of the Council.

I am aware of this matter and it was raised at our recent meeting with local Members of Parliament and local County Councillors. County Councillor Spencer who is the Deputy Highways Portfolio Holder has agreed to investigate the situation. The Director of Environment and Street Scene has also raised the issue with the County Council's Highways Office. We are hoping to get the bollards removed as it is accepted that there is a need for passengers to be able to board buses in Burton Road.

(g) Graffiti

By Councillor J M Whitehouse to Councillor Mrs D Collins, Leader of the Council (in the absence of the Community Wellbeing Portfolio Holder)

I acknowledge the decision to increase the graffiti removal budget by £30,000, but I note there has been no change in the policy not to undertake graffiti removal to privately owned premises or property. Can we not be more flexible in relation to the removal of graffiti from private property which backs onto private areas. In such cases there is little that property owners can do to prevent the problem and they are then faced with large bills to secure the removal of graffiti.

By leave of the Council, Councillor C Whitbread responded to this question.

Response by Councillor C Whitbread, Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder

This is a big issue for the District and we have made additional resources available to tackle the problem. I can assure private owners that any obscene graffiti will be removed without delay.

(h) Oakwood Hill Estate, Loughton - Flytipping**By Councillor Mrs P Richardson to Councillor Mrs M Sartin, Environmental Protection Portfolio Holder**

There is an area on the Oakwood Hill Housing Estate where tenants are able to leave old furniture etc for collection. This area is being used by others to dispose of car parts and other non-residential items. What action can the Council take to monitor the situation and is CCTV a possibility.

Response by Councillor Mrs M Sartin, Environmental Protection Portfolio Holder

This is often a problem where there is a designated area for residents of flats to dispose of their waste. I will consider the possibility of CCTV if the Councillor will provide me with the exact location of the area in question. The difficulty will be distinguishing between residents entitled to dispose of their waste in this location as opposed to others.

(i) Secondary School Education**By Councillor S Murray to Councillor Mrs D Collins, Leader of the Council**

On what basis have you decided that the main priority in this District in the new Local Area Agreement is failing secondary schools as opposed to other issues such as transport infrastructure and the provision of social housing. Can you also explain why it was not possible for all members of the Council to be involved in making this decision.

Response by Councillor Mrs D Collins, Leader of the Council

We already have responsibility for housing and some transportation issues and there is provision in our budgets for these matters. What we are trying to do is to explain what life is like in the district. We are really concerned about the standard of education for 11-18 year olds in the District and we believe this impacts on other problems e.g. unemployment, ASBOs and crime and disorder. The standard of education for 11-18 year olds in this District is not perceived as being high enough. Some secondary schools are doing well but others are poor when compared with the rest of the county. Harlow has gone through a similar process in recent years and as a result of all the relevant authorities working together their schools are improving. We will be highlighting other issues in our submission but as an overview to the County Council we feel that improving education for 11-18 year olds should be our top priority.

(j) Limes Farm Estate - CCTV**By Councillor J Knapman to Councillor D Stallan, Housing Portfolio Holder**

Can you advise when CCTV will be installed on the Limes Farm Estate?

Response by Councillor D Stallan, Housing Portfolio Holder.

I do not have the date available and I will advise you in writing.

By leave of the Council, Councillor Mrs D Collins, Leader of the Council advised that this matter would be discussed with officers at the meeting planned for the following day and that there was an intention to produce a comprehensive register of all CCTV throughout the District.

70. MOTIONS**(a) Portfolios - Responsibility for ICT**

By leave of the Council, Councillor Mrs D Collins, mover of the motion, withdrew this motion.

(b) Post Offices - Proposed Closures

By leave of the Council, Councillor Mrs D Collins, mover of this motion amended the wording of the motion set out on the agenda.

Revised motion by Councillor Mrs D Collins and seconded by Councillor C Whitbread

"That this Council –

(a) notes that under the Post Office's recently announced network change programme the following Post Offices in this District are proposed for closure:

Moreton
 Willingale
 Allnutts Road, Epping
 Station Way, Buckhurst Hill
 Manor Road, Chigwell
 Lindsey Street, Epping

(b) notes that the alternatives listed in the Post Office's consultation are as follows:

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Moreton | (alternatives: Fyfield or High Road, North Weald) |
| Willingale | (alternatives: Fyfield or High Street, Ongar) |
| Allnutts Road, Epping | (alternatives: High Street, Epping or Coppice Row, Theydon Bois) |
| Station Way, Buckhurst Hill | (alternatives: Queens Road, Buckhurst Hill or Broadway, Woodford Green) |
| Manor Road, Chigwell | (alternatives: Manford Way, Chigwell or Brook Parade, Chigwell) |
| Lindsey Street, Epping | (alternatives: High Street, Epping or High Road, North Weald) |

(c) notes that the closing date for responses to the consultation is 19 November 2007;

(d) resolves to inform the Post Office that the Council is totally opposed to the proposed closures on the following grounds:

- (i) the adverse effect on local communities of reduced access to Post Office services, particularly in the rural areas which exacerbates a problem created by previous rounds of Post Office closures;
 - (ii) the failure to take account of the needs of disabled, elderly and other similar people;
 - (iii) the detrimental effect on local retailing in villages and in town shopping centres which are already under threat from out of town retailing centres;
 - (iv) the absence of public transport links which makes many of the alternative facilities specified in the consultation document impracticable particularly when earlier village and local closures are borne in mind;
 - (v) the proposed closures are based on the achievement of financial economies which take no account of the Post Office's responsibilities for providing a public service;
 - (vi) the promotion of greater car use as alternative Post Offices will in most cases not be accessible by foot;
 - (vii) the current round of closures will re-enforce the solution of small communities from services which is already well established from earlier reorganisations;
 - (viii) the current proposals take no account the role of such Post Offices in helping to define cohesive local communities and a sense of community and which contradict the Government's aim of achieving sustainable communities;
- (e) resolves to send copies of the Council's objection to the local Members of Parliament involved; and
- (f) calls on the public of the District to protect their village or local Post Offices by using them to best advantage because not to do so will run the risk that they will be lost altogether for financial reasons"

First amendment moved by Councillor J Knapman and seconded by Councillor K Chana

"That paragraph (e) be amended to read -

resolves to send copies of the Council's objection together with any petitions received by this Council to the local Members of Parliament involved."

Carried

Second amendment moved by Councillor M Cohen and seconded by Councillor J Knapman

That paragraph (e) be further amended by the insertion of the words "by 17 November 2007" after the words "by this Council".

Carried

Third amendment moved by Councillor Mrs McEwen and seconded by Councillor A Watts.

"That the following words be added to paragraph (d) (i) after the words "in rural areas"- where existing provision can amount to as little as one hour per week".

Carried

Motion as amended ADOPTED

RESOLVED:

That this Council -

(a) notes that under the Post Office's recently announced network change programme, the following Post Offices in this District are proposed for closure:

Moreton
 Willingale
 Allnutts Road, Epping
 Station Way, Buckhurst Hill
 Manor Road, Chigwell
 Lindsey Street, Epping;

(b) notes that the alternatives listed in the Post Office's consultation are as follows:

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| Willingale | (alternatives: Fyfield or High Street, Ongar) |
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| Station Way, Buckhurst Hill | (alternatives: Queens Road, Buckhurst Hill or Broadway, Woodford Green) |
| Manor Road, Chigwell | (alternatives: Manford Way, Chigwell or Brook Parade, Chigwell) |
| Lindsey Street, Epping | (alternatives: High Street, Epping or High Road, North Weald); |

(c) notes that the closing date for responses to the consultation is 19 November 2007;

(d) resolves to inform the Post Office that the Council is totally opposed to the proposed closures on the following grounds:

(i) the adverse effect on local communities of reduced access to Post Office services, particularly in rural areas where existing provision can amount to as little as one hour per week which exacerbates a problem created by previous rounds of Post Office closures;

(ii) the failure to take account of the needs of disabled, elderly and other similar people;

- (iii) the detrimental effect on local retailing in villages and in town shopping centres which are already under threat from out of town retailing centres;
- (iv) the absence of public transport links which makes many of the alternative facilities specified in the consultation document impracticable particularly when earlier village and local closures are borne in mind;
- (v) the proposed closures are based on the achievement of financial economies which take no account of the Post Office's responsibilities for providing a public service.
- (vi) the promotion of greater car use, as alternative Post Offices will in most cases not be accessible by foot;
- (vii) the current round of closures will re-enforce the solution of small communities from services which is already well established from earlier reorganisations;
- (viii) the current proposals take no account of the role of such Post Offices in helping to define cohesive local communities and a sense of community and which contradict the Government's aim of achieving sustainable communities;
- (e) resolves to send copies of the Council's objection together with any petitions received by this Council by 17 November 2007 to the local Members of Parliament involved; and
- (f) calls on the public of the District to protect their village or local Post Offices by using them to best advantage because not to do so will run the risk that they will be lost altogether for financial reasons.

71. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS UNDER NOTICE

(a) To Any Member of the Cabinet

(i) Loughton Town Centre Enhancement - Replacement of Trees

By Councillor J Markham to Councillor Mrs A Grigg, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development

"At full Council on 26 June 2007, Councillor Cohen moved an amendment to a motion which was adopted about the removal of three trees from Centric Parade during the enhancement of Loughton High Road Town Centre stating that the current administration was working tirelessly to resolve problems associated with the replacement of those trees; can the Portfolio Holder advise what progress has been made?"

Response read by Councillor Mrs A Grigg, Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder

"The original concept of the enhancement scheme always had within it the provision of new or additional street trees. Therefore, whilst the loss of these particular trees was regrettable, it was always the intention that other trees would be provided to take their place, albeit in a different location. However, this has proven to be difficult to achieve for the following reasons:

- (a) establishing the ownership of the land which provides the best opportunity to re-provide the trees; and
- (b) the proximity of statutory undertakers equipment under the paved surface.

A Land Registry Search has shown the land as unregistered. The land also falls outside of that currently designed in the public record as adopted highway, and there is therefore a risk of challenge to the Council should it simply proceed to re-provide trees in this location.

It must be recognised that, despite the clearly expressed wish of the Council to re-provide trees, it may not be possible, even if the land ownership issues can be fully resolved. Trees can only be located where there is no statutory undertakers' equipment within the span of the roots. Whilst it is possible to restrict root growth within a containment system, great care has still to be exercised. Problems caused by statutory undertakers' equipment (e.g. cables, pipework) are many. The TCE Scheme itself had sometimes to be redesigned as it progressed, as cables and pipework prevented the original design detail from being implemented.

Discussions have commenced with the County Council as to whether the land should be considered as, and adopted as, public highway, since it was clearly considered as such when this Council operated as agents to the County Council for the Highways Service. The West Essex Manager has therefore agreed to investigate the history of the land with a view to adopting it as public highway. Adoption does not confer ownership but highway rights do take precedence over all others and this would enable the Council, subject to a technical appraisal in relation to underground equipment, to re-provide trees. I have raised this issue with the relevant County Council Portfolio Holder and gained his support.

A report on this issue will be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 12 November."

(ii) Loughton Parking Review

By Councillor K Angold-Stephens to Councillor A Green, Civil Engineering and Maintenance Portfolio Holder

"Residents will be pleased to hear that the beat surveys for the long-awaited Loughton Parking Review have been completed; can the Portfolio Holder explain what measures will be taken to implement and prioritise the results of the Parking Review?"

Response read by Councillor A Green, Civil Engineering and Maintenance Portfolio Holder

"At the present time, Essex County Council has been instructed to commission no further work on either the Loughton or Waltham Abbey Reviews. This action has been taken in the light of concerns regarding the known and anticipated costs associated with the Parking Reviews already underway, namely Buckhurst Hill and Epping. These concerns arise in the main from costs of advertising the draft traffic regulation orders and then publishing the final traffic regulation orders, both of which have necessitated the purchase of several pages of the local newspaper. Further construction works are still required to complete the review areas and as yet final costs are not known. Furthermore, six month reviews have to be undertaken and additional expenditure may be incurred resulting from those reviews. Given these

concerns I considered it prudent to delay any further commissioning of works until the financial picture was clearer and Cabinet has had an opportunity to consider its priorities."

(iii) The Broadway, Loughton - Gas Main

By Councillor K Angold-Stephens to Councillor Mrs A Grigg, Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder

"In view of the very substantial consequential costs and delays this Council has had to bear as a result of the mis-information provided by the gas supplier about the positioning of the gas main in The Broadway, Loughton, can the Portfolio Holder advise what response the Council has received following making representations about this mis-information and what further action she is proposing?"

Response by Councillor Mrs A Grigg, Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder

"I wrote sometime ago to the local office of National Grid Gas (NGG) but I am yet to receive a response. The Council's consultants are having similar difficulties in eliciting a response from NGG in respect of the Method Statement for construction of the scheme considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 8 October. The Director of Environment and Street Scene has recently written again in an effort to obtain a response. Whilst it is very important that the co-operation of NGG is obtained both at the detailed design stage and then throughout delivery, should a response not be forthcoming I will consider carefully other options including asking "Energy Watch" to intervene on the Council's behalf."

72. REPORTS OF THE CABINET

(a) Supplementary Estimates

Councillor Mrs D Collins, Leader of the Council and Chairman of the Cabinet, invited the Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder to present this report of the Cabinet.

(Mover: Councillor C Whitbread - Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder)

The Portfolio Holder submitted requests for supplementary estimates.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That a revenue DDF supplementary estimate in the sum of £4400 be approved to cover the costs incurred in relation to the District Council Bye-Election for the Loughton Alderton Ward held on 30 August 2007; and
- (2) That a supplementary capital estimate in the sum of £270,000 be approved in order to provide sufficient funding for completion of the Bobbingworth Tip Remediation Project.

73. REPORT OF THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

(a) Terms of Reference

(Mover: Councillor J Knapman, Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee)

Councillor Knapman presented a report proposing that non-elected members of the Committee be permitted to vote on matters coming before the Committee.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**.

RESOLVED:

That Section (11) of the terms of reference of the Audit and Governance Committee, "Decision Making", be amended to read as:

"Only the Councillors and Co-opted Members serving on the Committee shall be entitled to vote.

All Members of the Committee shall be entitled to all documents, advice and facilities relevant to their membership of the Committee regardless of their status as either a Councillor or Co-opted Member."

74. REPORT OF THE CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERS' SERVICES STANDING SCRUTINY PANEL

(a) Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

(Mover: Councillor R Church, Chairman of the Constitution and Members' Services Standing Scrutiny Panel)

Councillor Church presented a report of the Scrutiny Panel which had been authorised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to report direct to Council on this matter.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the proposals for polling districts and places as set out in the Appendix to the report to the Council be approved;

(2) That the proposals be published and copies made available for inspection by the public at the Civic Offices, in at least one place in each Parliamentary Constituency covering the District and on the Council's website.

75. EMERGENCY AND URGENT EXPENDITURE**(a) Roding Valley Lake****(Mover: Councillor M Cohen - Leisure and Young People Portfolio Holder)**

Councillor Cohen presented a report on the final cost of expenditure incurred to mitigate the impact of adverse environmental conditions experienced at the Roding Valley Lake.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**.

RESOLVED:

(1) The final cost of expenditure amounting to £7,295 outside of the Budgeting Framework, as advised by the Leisure and Young People Portfolio Holder, with respect to urgent measures taken to reduce the impact of adverse environmental conditions experienced at the Roding Valley Lake be noted; and

(2) That a supplementary District Development Fund estimate in the sum of £7,295 be approved.

(b) Ongar Leisure Centre and Leisure Services Offices**(Mover: Councillor M Cohen, Leisure and Young People Portfolio Holder)**

Councillor Cohen submitted a report in accordance with Paragraph 2.63 of Appendix B to Financial Regulations advising of the need to incur expenditure outside of the Budgeting Framework, on grounds of urgency.

Members noted that on 29 August 2007 a substantial amount of lead flashing had been stolen from the roof of Ongar Leisure Centre. As there had been a risk of water ingress to the building and interference to users, urgent work had been undertaken to repair the roof, with a non-lead alternative. Similarly on 8 October 2007 it had been established that some lead flashings had been stolen from the roof of the Leisure Services Offices, Hemnall Street, Epping.

Councillor Cohen advised that the Council's insurance policy did not cover thefts in these circumstances and that the costs had been met from the Council's Insurance Fund.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**.

RESOLVED:

That the need to incur expenditure amounted to £7,188 outside of the Budgeting Framework, as advised by the Leisure and Young People Portfolio Holder, with respect to urgent measures taken to repair the roofs of Ongar Leisure Centre and Leisure Services Offices, Hemnall Street, Epping be noted.

(c) Damage to Roadway - North Weald Airfield**(Mover: Councillor M Cohen - Leisure and Young People Portfolio Holder)**

Councillor Cohen submitted a report in accordance with Paragraph 2.63 of Appendix B to Financial Regulations advising of the need to incur expenditure outside of the Budgeting Framework, on grounds of urgency.

Members noted that during the period 17 July and 15 August 2007, North Weald Airfield had played an important role in supporting the World Scout Jamboree in particular as a transport and logistic hub. As part of the transport plan, some 250 coaches per day had transferred participants and visitors to both the main site in Chelmsford and other satellite venues. The coaches had been parked at the Airfield overnight. Despite pre-event inspections to access suitability of the infrastructure, it had become apparent that the main internal roadway, several hundred metres long, over the period of the hire, had become untenable and had broken up in many places. As the roadway was the main exit route for the market operation, was used by other hirers for driver training and was a designated route within the Airfield's Emergency Plan, it had been necessary to relay the roadway immediately after the scouts had vacated the site.

Councillor Cohen advised that in accordance with the Licence Agreement for the event the Scout Association was required to undertake all works to return the venue to the Council in a comparable condition. As a result discussions were taking place with the Scout Association about the reimbursement of the cost of reinstatement works amounting to £50,038. Members noted that the work had been funded initially from the existing maintenance budget for the Airfield for 2007/08 but that if the costs were not reclaimed this would have a significant impact on general planned maintenance for the remainder of the year. Councillor Cohen emphasised that the working relationship with the Scouts Association in relation to this matter had been very positive to date and he expected the issue to be resolved by agreement.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the need to incur expenditure outside of the Budgeting Framework, as advised by the Leisure and Young People Portfolio Holder, with respect to urgent measures taken to repair the roadway at North Weald Airfield be noted; and

(2) That a further report be submitted to the Council when the final cost to the Council is known.

76. JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

There were no reports for consideration under this heading.

77. HOUSING APPEALS AND REVIEW PANEL - MEMBERSHIP

The Council noted that as a result of the resignation of ex-councillor T Farr there was a vacancy for a substitute member on the Housing Appeals and Review Panel to be appointed on the nomination of the BNP Group.

Councillor Mrs P Richardson, Leader of the BNP Group, nominated Councillor T Frankland to fill this vacancy.

In accordance with Section 100(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, together with paragraphs 6 and 25 of the Council's Procedure Rules, the Chairman had permitted on grounds of urgency, consideration of this matter in order to avoid a delay in Councillor Frankland being able to determine appeals and reviews.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor T Frankland be appointed as a substitute member on the Housing Appeals and Review Panel for the remainder of the current municipal year.

CHAIRMAN