

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE**

**HELD ON 19 JANUARY 2015 AT 7.30 P.M. IN THE COUNCIL OFFICES, WEELEY**

**Present:** Councillors D Miles (Chairman), M Patten (Vice-Chairman), C Amos, C Callender, J Hawkins and A Pugh

**In Attendance:** Corporate Director (Corporate Services) (Martyn Knappett), Democratic Services Manager (Colin Sweeney), Democratic Services Officer (Janey Nice) and Executive Projects Officer (Keri Lawrence)

**41. WELCOME**

The Chairman extended a welcome to all Members, Officers and a member of the public to the meeting.

**42. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Howard and Tracey.

**43. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the last meeting of the Committee, held on 8 December 2014, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**44. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations made by Members at this time.

**45. REPORT ON ESSEX CHILD POVERTY STRATEGY**

With reference to Minute No.89 of the meeting of the Council held on 25 November 2014, the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) (Martyn Knappett) reminded Members that this item was before the Committee because of a question Councillor D R Mayzes had put to the Leader of the Council at that meeting concerning his Ward (Rush Green), since it had been reported as having the highest percentage of child poverty across the Tendring District.

The Executive Projects Officer (Keri Lawrence) informed the Committee that the Essex Child Poverty Strategy, which had been attached as an Appendix to the Report of the Corporate Director (Corporate Services), was a refresh of the previous 2011 to 2014 Strategy and that the new Strategy had followed on from the National Child Poverty Strategy.

Ms Lawrence said that child poverty was defined by a family's income being less than 60% of the National average income, which meant that if the average wage was £26,000 then a family earning below 60% of this (£15,600 per annum) would be included within the child poverty statistics for that area. She added that while the National Strategy looked at how difficult it was for families to get out of poverty, the Essex Strategy, while not so different, also focused on the causes, effect and indicators of child poverty. Ms Lawrence went on to say that there were high levels of child poverty in Essex, particularly across Tendring (24.4%), Basildon (21.9%) and Harlow (21.1%) with the Rush Green Ward (51.4%) and Golf Green Ward (49.1%) having the highest levels of child poverty in Essex. Ms Lawrence said that Tendring had the highest level of those persons Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETS) at 8.7%.

Ms Lawrence informed the Committee that there was no one particular cause of child poverty in Essex but contributing factors were health, housing, education, employment and family circumstances, which meant there was no one single answer to solve this issue. She went on to say that the Strategy focused on a three-pronged approach working with the most vulnerable, reducing worklessness and low income as well as building community resilience: this was without any extra funding to resource the Essex Child Poverty Strategy.

During discussion, a number of issues arose and Members indicated that they wished to be presented with information about Tendring District Council's work activities to reduce Child Poverty. In response to a Member's question as to what the Council was doing about child poverty, the Council's Corporate Director (Corporate Services) said that the Council provides a number of key core services which have a direct impact on child poverty – naming in particular housing, regeneration and Benefits. In addition the Council was working with Essex County Council (ECC) and other partners on specific projects also impacting on child poverty. He added that this Council did not focus or design its service provision around the issue of child poverty, although child poverty was considered to be a very important part of the wider deprivation which occurs in a number of areas in Tendring.

Members were concerned that the Council did not have a Child Poverty Strategy and did not seem to have participated in the consultation on the ECC strategy. The Chairman confirmed, when asked, that Councillor McWilliams was the Cabinet member responsible for this item.

A Member said that the Council had, in the past, had an Anti-Poverty Strategy but that it was no longer in place. He added that the living wage, fuel poverty, and consultation and discussion with affected families were very important and he also believed that families had not been consulted in the Strategy process. The Chairman said that the Council needed to be proactive rather than reactive and that once the Committee had had the opportunity to consider further and more detailed information both about the District Council's work and from the appropriate ECC representative it could consider appropriate recommendations to make to the Cabinet. She added that this Committee had to play its role and make a contribution to address these matters.

Some Members commented that the Council already does a great deal to combat Child Poverty and that it was important for individuals and the wider community to be empowered to take better control of their own circumstances.

Members considered that the appropriate member of the Cabinet be requested to attend a future meeting of this Committee, along with a member of the NE Essex Children's Partnership and the appropriate Senior Officer.

The Committee **AGREED** that a further report be brought forward to a (special if necessary) meeting of the Committee to explore this matter further and that, at that meeting, the appropriate Portfolio Holder, Senior Officer and ECC representative be invited to attend on a date to be advised to all members in due course by the Democratic Services Manager.

#### **46. HEALTH: MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE TO BE HELD ON 23 FEBRUARY 2015**

The Chairman reminded Members that Councillor Howard had been asked to prepare a list of suggested questions that could be put to the invited Health Services when they attended the Committee on 23 February. She added that whilst this had been intended to discuss at the Committee meeting on 8 December 2014, this had not happened due to the lateness of the hour.

As Councillor Howard was not present at this meeting she invited Members for their comments and suggestions as to what questions should be put to the Health professionals at the February meeting.

It was confirmed by the Democratic Services Manager that Colchester Hospital University Foundation Trust (CHUFT) and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) would be sending senior Officers to the February meeting and therefore it was agreed that the questions should be focussed to address issues which included:

- Performance Targets for the CCG and CHUFT plus General Practitioners and their current performances;
- Provision within the Community and the challenges this brought;
- How were older persons needs being met;
- Staff recruitment and retention – what was being done to attract people to work and live in the District and was there anything this Council could do to assist; and
- Where do the CCG and CHUFT see themselves in terms of performance in 12 months' time.

Mr Sweeney said he would be happy to share Councillor Howard's questions with the CCG and CHUFT and ask them to respond to the questions and circulate responses to Members or to make them aware of questions that could be put to them at the meeting.

The Chairman and Members thanked Councillor Howard for all of the hard work and effort he had put into preparing his impressive document.

#### **47. STATEMENT BY THE VICE-CHAIRMAN**

With reference to Minute No. 39 to the meeting of the Committee held on 8 December 2014, Councillor Patten (Vice-Chairman) advised the Committee that he had met at Manningtree Train Station, that morning, with Councillor G V Guglielmi (Essex County Councillor); Tendring District Councillor, Chairman of its Local Plan Committee and Portfolio Holder for Planning and Corporate Services, Paul Oxley (Stakeholder Manager with Abellio Greater Anglia), Martin Raynes, Chairman of Mistley Parish Council, Wendy St James (Clerk, Manningtree Town Council), Jayne Sumner (Essex County Council) and Colin Sweeney (Democratic Services Manager) to discuss overspill carparks, the access and exit to the Station and the future regeneration of Manningtree Station and its immediate surrounds.

It was moved by Councillor Patten and **AGREED** that a report on the findings of the meeting be drafted and presented at the next meeting of the Committee for approval and referral to Council.

The meeting was declared closed at 8.46 pm.

Chairman