

Minutes

Council Meeting

27th September 2010



Present:

| Councillors | Present | Councillors | Present |
|------------------------------|----------------|------------------------|----------------|
| J E Abbott | Yes | E R Lynch | Yes |
| M J Banthorpe | Yes | M Lynch | Yes |
| Miss L Barlow | Yes | D Mann | Yes |
| J Baugh | Yes | T McArdle | Yes |
| Mrs J C Beavis | Yes | N G McCrea | Yes |
| D L Bebb | Yes | J McKee | Yes |
| E Bishop | Yes | H J Messenger | Yes |
| R J Bolton | Yes | A M Meyer | Apologies |
| G Butland | Yes | R G S Mitchell | Yes |
| G Cohen | Yes | Mrs J M Money | Yes |
| J C Collar | Yes | Lady Newton | Yes |
| M Dunn | Apologies | Mrs A Olumbori | Yes |
| Mrs E Edey | Yes | J P O'Reilly-Cicconi | Yes |
| J G J Elliott | Yes | Mrs J A Pell | Apologies |
| R Elliston | Apologies | R Ramage | Yes |
| Dr R L Evans | Yes | D M Reid | Yes |
| A V E Everard | Yes | D E A Rice | Yes |
| J H G Finbow | Yes | Mrs C Sandbrook | Apologies |
| Ms L B Flint (Vice Chairman) | Yes | Mrs W D Scattergood | Yes |
| T J W Foster | Apologies | Mrs J W Schmitt | Yes |
| Mrs B A Gage | Yes | A F Shelton (Chairman) | Yes |
| M G Gage | Yes | Mrs L Shepherd | Yes |
| Mrs M E Galione | Apologies | C Siddall | Yes |
| J E B Gyford | Yes | Mrs J A Smith | Yes |
| N R H O Harley | Yes | Mrs G A Spray | Yes |
| Mrs S A Howell | Yes | F Swallow | Apologies |
| P J Hughes | Yes | Miss M Thorogood | Yes |
| D L Hume | Apologies | S M Walsh | Yes |
| M C M Lager | Yes | R G Walters | Yes |
| S J Lambourne | Yes | T S Wilkinson | Yes |

The Chairman welcomed all Councillors to the meeting and he extended a warm welcome to members of the public and press present at the meeting.

PUBLIC SESSION

29 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman referred to the following announcements:-

Garden Party

On 14th July 2010 the Chairman had hosted a garden party at Shrubs Farm, Lamarsh which over 80 people had attended. The guests were volunteers from local charity and community organisations whose work had made a great contribution to the residents of the District.

Golf Day

The Chairman's Charity Golf Day had taken place on 4th August 2010 and it had been very successful in raising £5,452 for the Chairman's two charities Braintree District Mencap Society and Marie Curie Cancer Care.

Help for Heroes

On 13th September 2010, the Chairman had presented a cheque for £335.76 to the Volunteer County Coordinator for the Help for Heroes charity. This had been the total amount raised from the sale of wristbands from Causeway House Reception. The Chairman thanked everyone who had purchased a wristband and he indicated that a further supply would be made available for sale in the very near future.

Tour of Britain

The Chairman reported that Stage 7 of the Tour of Britain International Cycle Race had passed through the Braintree District on 17 September 2010 and he thanked everyone who had supported this event.

70th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain

The Chairman was pleased to report that he had recently attended a ceremony to mark the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain. The Chairman stated that he had been honoured to meet many decorated airmen, most of whom were now in their nineties, who had flown during World War II.

Engagements of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

The list of events attended by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman since the last meeting of the Council held on 28th June 2010 was noted.

30 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

INFORMATION: The following interests were declared:-

Councillor J E Abbott declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 7 Core Strategy Submission Draft, Item 8 (iii) Policy Recommendations and References – Committees Public Session (Witham Local Committee, 14th September 2010 – Draft

Core Strategy) and Item 9 – Statements by Members as he was the Chairman of Rivenhall Parish Council which had submitted representations on the Core Strategy.

Councillor Miss L Barlow declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 7 Core Strategy Submission Draft and Item 8 (iii) Policy Recommendations and References – Committees Public Session (Witham Local Committee, 14th September 2010 – Draft Core Strategy) as she was a Member of Witham Town Council which had commented on the Core Strategy.

Councillor J Baugh declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 6 Silver End Village Hall - Petition as he was Chairman of Braintree District Children's Centres Partnership who were major tenants of Silver End Village Hall and a Member of the Council's Fees and Charges Task and Finish Group, and Item 7 Core Strategy Submission Draft as he was an Architectural Consultant with an interest in the Core Strategy.

Councillor P J Hughes declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 6 Silver End Village Hall - Petition and Item 7 Core Strategy Submission Draft as he was a Member of Silver End Parish Council.

Councillor M C M Lager declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 7 Core Strategy Submission Draft and Item 8 (iii) Policy Recommendations and References – Committees Public Session (Witham Local Committee, 14th September 2010 – Draft Core Strategy) as he was a Member of Witham Town Council which had commented on the Core Strategy.

Councillor Mrs J M Money declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 7 Core Strategy Submission Draft and Item 8 (iii) Policy Recommendations and References – Committees Public Session (Witham Local Committee, 14th September 2010 – Draft Core Strategy) as she was a Member of Witham Town Council which had commented on the Core Strategy.

Councillor Mrs W D Scattergood declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 8 (ii) Policy Recommendations and References – Committees Public Session (Audit Committee, 9th September 2010 – Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2010/11) as her son-in-law was a lawyer working on behalf of the Icelandic Banks in legal action versus United Kingdom local authorities. Councillor Mrs Scattergood indicated that her son-in-law had already made submissions to the High Court. Councillor Mrs Scattergood left the meeting whilst this item was considered and she did not take part in the discussion or vote.

Councillor Miss M Thorogood declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 10 (i) Question Time - Statement by Councillor Mrs Schmitt Cabinet Member for Clean, Green and Safe (New Play Area at Tabor Avenue, Braintree) as she was associated with Greenfields Community Housing Association.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct all Members remained in the meeting for these items and took part in the debate and decision thereon, unless stated otherwise.

31 **MINUTES**

DECISION: That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 28th June 2010 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

32 **QUESTION TIME**

INFORMATION: There were five statements made, a summary of which is contained in the Appendix to these Minutes.

33 **SILVER END VILLAGE HALL - PETITIONS**

INFORMATION: Two separate petitions were presented at the meeting: one from Mr White comprising 758 signatures and the other from Councillor Abbott comprising 836 signatures. The petitions reflected the concerns of local residents and community groups about increases in fees and the future management of the facility. The petitions requested that the following action should be taken:-

That the Council should set the letting fees to affordable rates for groups and users;

That the Council should retain the management of the Hall and work with the community to establish a plan for long term improvements.

Members were reminded that on 13th September 2010, the Cabinet had agreed revised charges for those users of the Hall who had the benefit of "double discounts" and they had been advised that their increases would be limited to £2 per hour with a cap to ensure that they did not pay more than the rate set out in the fees and charges policy approved in February 2010. The Cabinet had stated also that the Council would continue to work with communities to transfer local facilities, which would include exploring the potential for establishing a new Community Trust that could embrace the appropriate community facilities currently managed by the Council.

Each petition organiser was then invited to address the Council.

Mr White stated that the two main issues of concern were the increased hire fees and the future management of Silver End Village Hall. Mr White welcomed the Cabinet's decision to limit the increase in fees for certain users to £2 per hour. However, he considered that it would be difficult to devolve management responsibilities as it was unlikely that there were people living locally with the appropriate expertise. Mr White stated also that Silver End was reported to be the largest Village Hall in the country. Mr White indicated that there were many diverse users of the Hall and that, for this reason, closure of the Hall would not be possible in the medium-term.

Councillor Abbott referred to the overwhelming local opposition to the increased fees and changed management arrangements for the Village Hall. Whilst Councillor Abbott welcomed the Cabinet's revised decision regarding fees, he stated that some users of the Hall would still be threatened including Seedlings Pre-School Group which had indicated that it might close. Councillor Abbott expressed concern that the Cabinet was unwilling to enter into discussions about the future of the Hall and that the Cabinet Member for Clean, Green and Safe had indicated that closure of the

Hall was an option even though this was not referred to in the Council's policy. Councillor Abbott stated that the Village Hall was a valuable resource for the people of Silver End and also for those living in surrounding villages. Councillor Abbott requested that a joint meeting between relevant parties should be called in order to discuss the Hall and to secure its long-term future.

In debating this item, Members highlighted the benefits which some communities had experienced through managing their local halls either by Committee, or Charitable Trust, and of the need for the Council to manage its halls in a consistent manner. However, whilst it was considered important to have regard to the views of the community, it was felt that devolving power to local people might not be feasible if they did not have the relevant expertise. Furthermore, it was noted that Silver End Parish Council had discussed the possibility of managing the Hall, but based on the terms put forward by the District Council, the Parish Council would be required to employ a full-time caretaker and to be responsible for maintenance costs which meant that this was not feasible.

In noting and responding to the petitions Councillor Mrs Schmitt, Cabinet Member for Clean Green and Safe, referred to the Cabinet's decision of 13th September 2010 paragraph (3) of which stated that further discussions would be held with user groups and other interested parties as to the future options regarding Silver End Village Hall. Councillor Mrs Schmitt indicated that these discussions would centre on the possible establishment of a Community Trust. Councillor Mrs Schmitt stated that Community Trusts operated successfully across the country and they were able to access funding which the Council could not.

DECISION: That the petitions relating to increased hire fees and the future management of Silver End Village Hall be noted.

34 **CORE STRATEGY SUBMISSION DRAFT**

INFORMATION: Consideration was given to a report submitted to the Local Development Framework Panel on 22nd September 2010 on the representations which had been submitted on the Core Strategy Submission Draft following public consultation.

Members were advised that the Core Strategy Submission Draft had been published for public consultation on 10th May 2010. The period for the submission of representations had been extended to 8th July 2010 to enable comments to be made on the proposed abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS).

The Council had agreed previously to continue with the preparation of the Core Strategy and to reject the option of increasing the housing requirement for the District. However, the Council was now required to determine whether to continue with the proposed housing provision contained in Policy CS1 of the Core Strategy which was based on the RSS assessment, or to decrease the housing provision.

The number of dwellings to be provided in the District during the period 2009 to 2026 now amounted to 4,637, representing an average of 272 dwellings per annum. Whilst the RSS had been abolished, the population growth and housing need evidence base was still relevant and, in particular, the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2008 indicated that an annual supply of 673 new affordable homes was

needed in the District. It was proposed that 30% of the growth locations identified in the Core Strategy should contribute to this need.

In debating this item Members spoke for and against the growth locations which had been identified, particularly those at Forest Road, Rivenhall and Lodge Farm, Witham. Reference was made to the significant opposition to these sites and to the need for them. It was also reported that an alternative development site at Conrad Road, Witham had been put forward, but rejected. Reference was also made to the Coalition Government's Localism Bill which encouraged the consideration of local opinions. However, concern was also expressed that if the proposed development sites were to be abandoned to await the enactment of the Localism Bill indiscriminate development could take place as a consequence of planning permission being granted on appeal.

In considering this item reference was made to Witham Local Committee's consideration of the Core Strategy on 14th September 2010 (Minute 25) and the Local Committee's Recommendation to Council. This Recommendation was formally moved by Councillor Dr Evans and seconded by Councillor Gyford as follows:-

- (1) 'That following the Government's statement that it will "rapidly abolish Regional Strategies" (letter from the Secretary of State to the Council 27th May 2010) and in the light of the new commitment from the Government that local communities should be at the heart of planning decision making, that the Council removes the "Growth Location" of 300 houses on land off Forest Road/Rectory Lane in the Parish of Rivenhall as set out in the Draft Core Strategy.'
- (2) That proposals for Lodge Farm be re-considered.
- (3) That alternative sites be considered as already submitted to the Council through the Local Development Framework process.'

On being put to the vote the amendment was declared LOST.

It was subsequently moved by Councillor McCrea and seconded by Councillor Lager that the Recommendation of the Local Development Framework Panel from 22nd September 2010 be approved and on being put to the vote the motion was declared CARRIED. Councillor Abbott, supported by Councillors Dr Evans and Hughes called for a recorded vote, the results of which were as follows:-

| <u>For the Motion</u> Councillors | <u>Against the Motion</u> Councillors | <u>Abstentions</u> Councillors |
|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| Banthorpe | Abbott | Dr Evans |
| Baugh | Miss Barlow | Ms Flint |
| Mrs Beavis | Bishop | Mrs Howell |
| Bebb | Gyford | Lambourne |
| Bolton | Hughes | M Lynch |
| Butland | E Lynch | Mann |
| Cohen | | Mrs Money |
| Collar | (6) | Rice |

Mrs Edey
Elliott
Everard
Finbow
Mrs B Gage
M Gage
Harley
Lager
McArdle
McCrea
McKee
Messenger
Mitchell
Lady Newton
Mrs Olumbori
O'Reilly-Cicconi
Ramage
Reid
Mrs Scattergood
Mrs Schmitt
Shelton
Mrs Shepherd
Siddall
Mrs Smith
Mrs Spray
Miss Thorogood
Walsh
Walters
Wilkinson

(8)

(37)

Councillors Dunn, Elliston, Foster, Mrs Galione, Hume, Meyer, Mrs Pell, Mrs Sandbrook and Swallow (9) were absent from the meeting.

DECISION:

- (1) That the proposed housing provision of a minimum of 4637 dwellings in the Braintree District between 2009 and 2026, as set out in Policy CS1 of the Core Strategy, be retained.
- (2) That the focused changes and minor changes to the Core Strategy as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be approved and published for the purpose of consultation in accordance with the procedure referred to in Appendix 1, subject to the recommendation relating to the representation submitted by Countryside Properties (Special Projects) Ltd regarding Chapter 6 – Economy, Paragraphs 6.11 – 6.23, Policy CS4, Map 5 and the inclusion of B8 uses on employment land to the west of the A131 Great Notley being amended from 'No Change' to 'restrict the overall quantum of B8 use to no more than 40% of the total floor area and restrict the largest unit size to 7,500 sq m'. The following amendments to the proposed focused changes were also agreed namely, Chapter 5 Housing, Paragraph 5.26 – to include

a reference to the definition of affordable housing as being that set out in PPS3; Chapter 5 Housing, Paragraph 5.29 – the sentence ‘(A pitch normally accommodates two caravans)’ to be retained; and Chapter 6 Economy Table 1 Employment Land – ‘2010’ to be highlighted and ‘2009’ to be added with a strike through.

- (3) That the Sustainability Appraisal of the Core Strategy be reviewed to take account of the focused changes.
- (4) That the progress of the Localism Bill be monitored and representations made, as appropriate, to ensure that local opinion is at the heart of local planning.

35 **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND REFERENCES (PUBLIC SESSION)**

INFORMATION: The following Recommendations were considered:-

(i) Local Development Framework Panel – 4th August 2010

Minute 15(1) – Growth Area Funding - Proposal for Expenditure

Councillor M G McCrea, Chairman of the Local Development Framework Panel, presented the Recommendation of the Panel which was set out in paragraph (I) of the Decision.

In discussing this item, Councillor E R Lynch asked when the Freeport foot/cycle bridge, Braintree would be completed. As it was not possible to answer this question at the meeting, it was agreed that a written response would be sent to Councillor Lynch and copied to all Members. Councillor R Ramage asked when the Motts Lane foot/cycle bridge, Witham would be provided and it was stated that work should start on site in January 2011.

DECISION: That the expenditure of Growth Area funding be agreed, in principle, as follows:

- £120,000 additional funding for the Freeport foot/cycle bridge, Braintree
- a contribution to the Motts Lane foot/cycle bridge, Witham

Audit Committee – 9th September 2010

Minute 28 – Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2010/11

Councillor G Cohen, Chairman of the Audit Committee, presented the Recommendation of the Committee, subject to the word ‘conjunction’ in the third paragraph of the decision being amended to ‘consultation’.

DECISION:

- (1) That the Mid-Year Treasury Management Report 2010/11 be noted.

- (2) That the Council's minimum long-term credit rating criteria applied to banks/ building societies used for investment purposes be revised to at least A+ (from AA-) and that a lowest common denominator approach be applied where ratings are provided by all three leading credit rating agencies (Fitch, Moody's and Standard and Poor's).
- (3) That the Corporate Director for Finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Efficiency and Resources and, where appropriate, the Council's Monitoring Officer be authorised to take whatever action is necessary in order to protect and maximise the recovery of the Council's investments at risk with the Icelandic Banks.

Witham Local Committee – 14th September 2010

Minute 25 – Draft Core Strategy

The Recommendation of Witham Local Committee was dealt with under Item 7 - Core Strategy (Minute 34 refers)

Licensing Committee – 15th September 2010

Minute 18 – Statement of Licensing Policy

Councillor M J Banthorpe, Chairman of the Licensing Committee, presented the Recommendation of the Committee.

In discussing this item, Councillor J McKee referred to an application for a premises licence in respect of The Vault, 2-4 Great Square, Braintree which had been granted following a recent Licensing Hearing, despite objections being submitted by Councillors and local residents. Councillor McKee referred to problems of anti-social behaviour and, as there were a number of late night premises operating in the same area, he questioned whether the Licensing Committee would consider adopting a cumulative impact policy.

In response, Councillor Banthorpe stated that the Licensing Committee had considered this issue and had acknowledged that a concentration of licensed premises in a particular area could result in anti-social behaviour etc and that the amenity of local residents could be placed under severe pressure, but that this may not be attributable to any individual premises. Councillor Banthorpe indicated that having regard to the evidence currently available, the Committee had concluded that there was no particular part of the District which was causing a cumulative impact on any of the licensing objectives. However, residents, businesses, or a responsible authority could require the licensing authority to consider whether any additional licences or substantial variations to existing licences would lead to an unacceptable saturation in an area with the onus being on the objector to provide evidence that a cumulative impact would occur.

DECISION: That the Statement of Licensing Policy, as amended, be adopted.

36 **STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS (PUBLIC SESSION)**

Statement by Councillor J E Abbott

Councillor Abbott made a statement about how the Council consulted with local communities and how their views were taken into account, particularly with respect to the Local Development Framework Core Strategy and the proposed growth location in Rivenhall Parish, and regarding community halls.

Councillor Abbott stated that when consulting with local communities the Council should consider the responses submitted and not ignore these. Councillor Abbott referred to the numerous objections which had been submitted following consultation on the Local Development Framework regarding the proposed growth locations at Forest Road, Rivenhall and Lodge Farm, Witham and to the results of surveys of local people which illustrated the opposition to these proposals. Councillor Abbott stated that residents were important and he felt that those living in Rivenhall and Witham had been ignored.

Response by Councillor G Butland, Leader of the Council

Councillor Butland stated that the Council had a good consultation process in place and mechanisms by which people could make their views known. In particular, the representations submitted with respect to the Local Development Framework had been made available for Members of the Local Development Framework Panel to read. However, Councillor Butland indicated that it was not always possible to agree with the responses received and that decisions had to be made which would benefit the District as a whole rather than appeasing local areas.

37 **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS (PUBLIC SESSION)**

(i) **Reports from the Leader and Cabinet Members**

INFORMATION: Consideration was given to the written reports of the Leader and Cabinet Members.

Councillor Butland, Leader of the Council

The following questions were asked in response to Councillor Butland's report:-

With regard to the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), Councillor Dr Evans asked what savings had been achieved following the decision to stop funding projects BRA 6 'Creative Communities', BRA 18 'Village Agents' and BRA 20 'Homelessness Prevention'? In response, Councillor Butland stated that decisions had been required about the priority of future funding arrangements due to a reduction in Performance Reward Grant. Councillor Butland indicated that projects BRA 6 and BRA 20 had come to a natural end and that BRA 18 would continue although without support from the Braintree District LSP. Councillor Butland stated that he would provide all Members with details of the savings which had been achieved.

Councillor Gyford referred to the revision to the Council's Corporate Objectives and Performance Targets 2010/11 and he asked if March 2011 was still the anticipated commencement date for the construction of Witham Leisure Centre? In response, Councillor Butland stated that the date had been revised due to the need to resolve some issues, but that the Council was committed to the scheme and it was hoped that the start date would not be delayed too long.

Regarding the proposed Local Enterprise Partnership between Essex and Kent, Councillor M Gage asked why the Partnership was being created with Kent and where meetings of the Partnership would take place? In reply, Councillor Butland stated that Essex and Kent had much in common and that the proposed Partnership, which was supported by businesses, would have significant power. It was anticipated that there would be a sub-structure within the Partnership to deal with more local issues.

Councillor Lager, Efficiency and Resources

The following question was asked in response to Councillor Lager's report:-

With reference to Asset Management, Councillor Dr Evans asked what share the potential occupier of Mayland House, Witham had agreed to contribute towards the running costs? In response, Councillor Lager stated that negotiations were currently taking place, but that this was commercially sensitive.

Councillor Lady Newton, Housing and Well-Being

No questions were asked in response to Councillor Lady Newton's report.

Councillor Mrs Schmitt, Clean, Green and Safe

The following question was asked in response to Councillor Mrs Schmitt's report:-

Councillor Dr Evans asked if Forest Road Community Hall, Witham had been closed? In response, Councillor Mrs Schmitt indicated that the Hall had not closed yet, but that the only user of the Hall had agreed to use Witham Public Hall instead.

In considering this item, Councillor M Gage was pleased to report that Halstead had been awarded the Gold Award and Best Town in Anglia in Bloom and Silver Gilt in Britain in Bloom.

Councillor Walters, Environment and Sustainability

No questions were asked in response to Councillor Walters' report.

Councillor Harley, Enterprise and Culture

The following questions were asked in response to Councillor Harley's report:-

Councillors Abbott and Ms Flint asked why Ward Members had not been advised about the meeting held on 13th September 2010 between the Council and representatives of the Highways Agency and Essex County Council regarding the A120? Councillor Lady Newton asked if any consideration had been given to declassifying the A120 so that it would become Essex County Council's responsibility? In addition, Councillor E Lynch asked when the proposed slip ways at Galleys Corner would be provided? In response, Councillor Harley apologised for not advising Ward Members about the meeting, but he indicated that he was happy to share information about the matters discussed. Councillor Harley stated that declassification of the A120 had not been raised at the meeting. However, County Councillor Walters would be attending a site meeting and he could be asked to raise this point then. Councillor Harley reported that he did not know the timescale for improvements to Galleys Corner. However, the seriousness of the road's deficiencies had been stressed and a further meeting would be taking place in six months' time at which progress would be reviewed.

Councillor Mrs Beavis, Customers and Community Support

The following questions were asked in response to Councillor Mrs Beavis' report:-

Councillor M Gage asked where the new Halstead Customer Service Point would be? In response, Councillor Mrs Beavis stated that it would be located in Halstead Library. In a supplementary question, Councillor M Gage asked if Halstead Town Council, as the owner of the building, had been consulted? Councillor Mrs Beavis indicated that there had been much consultation, particularly with Essex County Council which was the leaseholder. The new facility would open in November 2010. Councillor Shelton asked if there would be facilities at the new Service Point to enable Councillors to have interviews with people in their Wards. Councillor Mrs Beavis confirmed that there would be. Councillor Ramage asked why the Members' Evening scheduled for 16th September 2010 had been cancelled particularly in view of the need to keep Councillors informed about a number of current issues. Councillor Mrs Beavis stated that the event had been cancelled due to lack of interest. It was hoped that a new date would be set later in the year.

(ii) **Oral Questions Without Notice to the Leader on any Non-Operational Matter**

INFORMATION: There were none.

(iii) **Chairmen's Statements**

INFORMATION: No statements were made.

(iv) **Minutes of Meetings (Public Session)**

INFORMATION: Members were invited to raise any matters arising from meetings that had been held in Public Session since the Council meeting held on 28th June 2010.

Cabinet – 13th September 2010

Councillor Abbott referred to Minute 25 – Update on Community Halls Review – Silver End Village Hall and he stated that the figures quoted in the first paragraph were incorrect. Councillor Abbott indicated also that the text of the Minute did not record the Cabinet Member stating that if the management of the Hall was not transferred it could close.

The Chairman stated that these points should be raised at the next Cabinet meeting in considering the accuracy of the Minutes.

Cabinet – 13th September 2010

Councillor E Lynch referred to Minute 31 -Office Accommodation and he asked if the proposed rest areas for Causeway House would be open plan?

Councillor Lynch was advised that this was an operational matter.

38 **BUSINESS OF EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

INFORMATION: There were no reports received from Council representatives on external organisations, or issues raised.

As there were no items in Private Session, the Chairman closed the meeting.

The meeting commenced at 7.15pm and closed at 10.00pm.

Councillor A F Shelton

(Chairman)

APPENDIX

COUNCIL MEETING

27TH SEPTEMBER 2010

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Summary of Questions Asked / Statements Made During Question Time

(1) Statements Relating to Agenda Item 6 – Silver End Village Hall - Petition

(i) Statement by Mrs D Phillips, Seedlings Pre-School Group, Silver End

Mrs Phillips stated that she was Chairperson of Seedlings Pre-School Group which used facilities at Silver End Village Hall. Whilst Mrs Phillips noted the revised hire fees agreed at the Cabinet meeting on 13th September 2011, she indicated that the cost to the Pre-School Group was still high and that the Group was having to consider its future. Mrs Phillips stated that the Village Hall was used by many people in the community and that it was an important facility.

(ii) Statement by Mrs P Gilligan (speaking on behalf of Silver End Parish Council) 37 Runnacles Street, Silver End

Mrs Gilligan stated that she was speaking on behalf of Silver End Parish Council who were extremely concerned about the future of Silver End Village Hall. Whilst Mrs Gilligan welcomed the recent reduction in the increased hire charges, she stated that this would be a temporary measure and that it would not make the Hall more viable. Mrs Gilligan stated that Braintree District Council's lack of investment in the Hall made it less attractive and, in view of the running costs, it was unlikely that anyone would want to take on responsibility for the management of this large Hall. Mrs Gilligan stated that the Village Hall had a historical attachment to the village and that it was well used by various groups and organisations and that the community could not afford to lose it. Mrs Gilligan asked the District Council to work with local groups and to ensure that the Hall was let at a rent which was affordable to the local community.

(2) Statements Relating to Agenda Item 7 – Core Strategy Submission Draft

(i) Statement by Councillor R Wright, Rivenhall Parish Council, 303 Rickstones Road, Rivenhall

Councillor Wright stated that he had spoken to Priti Patel MP about the proposed growth location at Forest Road, Rivenhall. Councillor Wright stated that Mr Brice, who was a landowner in the area, was an active member of Witham Conservative Association, but that so far no Councillors had declared an interest in knowing him. Councillor Wright referred to the considerable opposition, illustrated by representations and surveys of local people to the

proposed growth locations at Rivenhall and Witham. This opposition had been supported by Witham Local Committee. Councillor Wright expressed concern that the Local Development Framework Panel had ignored local residents. Councillor Wright referred to the new era and the Coalition Government's view that local residents should be listened to.

(ii) Statement by Mr J Getty, The Old Rectory, Rectory Lane, Rivenhall

Mr Getty referred to the proposed development off Forest Road and Rectory Lane, Rivenhall. Mr Getty stated that this development would be wholly in the Parish of Rivenhall and that it had been overwhelmingly rejected by residents of Rivenhall and Witham and by Rivenhall Parish Council and Witham Town Council. Mr Getty stated that development within the Rectory Triangle had consistently been rejected as eroding the green wedge between Rivenhall and Witham and that the proposed site formed part of that green wedge. Mr Getty indicated that the site had previously been opposed by the Local Development Framework Panel, but had been re-instated by the Council. Mr Getty rejected accusations of 'nimbyism' and that the objections submitted had been carbon copies. Mr Getty stated that affordable homes which would promote the health of the village were required. Mr Getty suggested that, pending new Government legislation, full consultation should take place with local people to ascertain what they wanted.

(iii) Statement by Mr M Austin, 46 Holly Walk, Witham

Mr Austin stated that the points which he had proposed to make had already been covered. Mr Austin expressed concern about trees that would be lost through development.