

Environmental Services Committee – 9 April 2002

Minutes of the meeting of the **Environmental Services Committee** held on **9 April 2002** when there were present:

Cllr V H Leach - Chairman

Cllr R S Allen
Cllr P A Capon
Cllr K A Gibbs
Cllr Mrs J M Giles
Cllr Mrs L Hungate

Cllr C C Langlands
Cllr T Livings
Cllr P D Stebbing
Cllr Mrs M S Vince
Cllr Mrs M J Webster

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs J E Ford and D R Helson.

SUBSTITUTES

Cllrs C I Black and Mrs W M Stevenson

NON-MEMBERS ATTENDING

Cllr M G B Starke

DISTRICT OFFICERS PRESENT

R Crofts – Corporate Director, Finance and External Affairs
S Clarkson – Head of Revenues & Housing Management
S Scrutton – Head of Planning Services
G Woolhouse – Head of Housing, Health & Community Care
C Paget – Audit & Process Review Manager
S Worthington – Committee Administrator

COUNTY OFFICERS PRESENT

N McCullagh – Area Manager, Transportation and Operational Services
T Tite – District Engineer
L Harvey – Assistant District Engineer
M Tiller – Technician

Note:

The Committee noted the sad news that the condition of the Chairman of this Council has worsened considerably and that her family has asked that there be no contact at this time.

138 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2002 were approved as a

correct record and signed by the Chairman.

139 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr C I Black declared a non pecuniary interest in item 11 by virtue of being a resident of Love Lane, Rayleigh.

140 ISSUES ARISING FROM ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 26 MARCH 2002

The following issues arising from the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 26 March 2002 were considered.

(1) Planning: Delivering a Fundamental Change – Green Paper (Min. 119/02)

Resolved

- (1) That the wording in the bullet points to Minute 96/02 be strengthened so that the resolution reads:-

“That this report forms the basis of the Rochford District Council’s response to the Government Green Paper “Planning: Delivering a Fundamental Change”, subject to the following Member comments:-

- Disagreement with the proposal that there should be new business planning zones with relaxed planning controls.
- Support for the proposal that planning consents be limited to three rather than five years, with applications for renewals being considered afresh.
- It is totally contradictory for the Government to say that the process for Local plans should be speeded up, while at the same time seeking more extensive community involvement.
- Disagreement with a local plan system that can change on a day-to-day basis, stability being essential to any planning system.
- A major omission is that there is no indication of whether the District Council or the planning applicant would bear the charge for the responses of statutory consultees.
- It is fundamentally desirable that Parish Councils, Chambers of Trade and other local organisations are not left out of the process.
- There is a specific requirement to fill the gap between the local development framework and the regional tier.

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- Concern that many of the changes proposed in the Green Paper should not be implemented until a Regional Government has been elected by popular franchise. (HPS)

(2) That the Government should also be advised:-

- That more time should have been given for responses to this fundamentally important Green Paper.
- This Council would have liked further clarification on what is actually meant by the opportunity for more autonomy in planning at local level with specific examples of how local autonomy could be carried forward. (HPS)

(2) Public Transport Initiatives – Invitation for Bid Submissions to the Rural and Urban Challenge Funds (Min. 121/02)

Resolved

That the Rayleigh Association of Voluntary Services be approached on the possibilities for joint working to establish the feasibility of submitting Challenge Fund bids aimed at addressing transport in areas of demonstrable need within the District. (CE)

(3) Rochford District Replacement Local Plan – New Sections and Timetable for Deposit (Min. 122/02)

Resolved

That the Environmental Services Committee be advised that time and resource pressures are such that it is unlikely that the Local Plan First Deposit Draft will be finalised before September 2002. (HPS)

141 OUTSTANDING ISSUES

The Committee received the schedule relating to decisions.

Land North of the Market Square, Rochford (Min. 285/00)

Little progress has been made on this issue. This Authority was waiting for the landowners, including the County Council, to reach an agreement to market the site.

Stambridge Sewage Treatment Works – Progress Report (Min. 14/02)

Responding to a Member enquiry, Officers confirmed that Anglian Water had not complied with an abatement notice in respect of noise nuisance. A legal issue had arisen relating to whether an abatement notice could actually be served on a sewage works, based on whether a sewage works could be defined as a premises. Legal Officers were actively pursuing this issue.

The Chairman moved a motion and it was:-

Resolved

That this Committee delegates authority to the appropriate Officers to proceed with enforcement of the noise abatement notice, subject to positive legal advice, and that a report be brought back to this Committee should enforcement action not be appropriate. (HHHCC/HLS)

Uplands Park Road, Rayleigh – Proposed Extension to Existing Waiting Restrictions and No Stopping on Existing School Keep Clear Marking (Min. 19/02)

Concern was expressed that this site was dangerous for pedestrians and that there should be enforcement of the restrictions in place in Uplands Park Road.

There was a general consensus that the issue of unauthorised parking around schools in the District should be raised with the Police. County Officers confirmed that they would bring this issue to the attention of the Police.

On a motion moved by Cllr K A Gibbs and seconded by Cllr P A Capon it was:-

Resolved

That a letter be sent to Rayleigh Police requesting that the extension to waiting restrictions and no stopping on existing School Keep Clear markings in Uplands Park Road be enforced. (HPS)

Rochford Town Centre Enhancement Further Issues – Taxi Rank and Horse Trough

County Officers confirmed that the projected start date for enhancements to Market Square was 22 April.

Southend Civic Amenity Site (Min. 95/02)

The Chief Executive had now written to Cllr Twitchen pursuing the proposals.

142 LATEST REVIEW OF LOCALLY DETERMINED PROGRAMME 2001/2002 AND PRESENTATION OF LOCALLY DETERMINED PROGRAMME 2002/2003

The Committee considered the report of the Area Manager, County Highways informing Members of progress on the locally determined programme 2001/2002 and asking Members to approve the locally determined programme for the financial year 2002/2003.

Residential Zones

County Officers confirmed that the 4 residential zones had to be ranked in order of priority.

New/Improved Footways

In response to a Member enquiry relating to the timescale for the Compulsory Purchase Order required for completing the footway in Stambridge Road, County Officers confirmed that it was not possible to determine how long a Compulsory Purchase Order might take. The CPO would be advertised in April.

County Officers further confirmed that the footway at Oldbury Cottages, Southend Road, Great Wakering was only half completed during 2001/2002 because of the necessity of funds being apportioned to various projects throughout the District. Funds to complete the scheme were included in the programme for 2002/2003.

Resolved

- (1) That the proposed programme outlined in Item 4 of the report be adopted as the Locally Determined Programme for 2002/2003.

On a motion moved by the Chairman, it was further:-

Resolved

- (2) That the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee consider adopting a three or five year programme for future Locally Determined Programmes. (County Highways)

143 PROPOSAL FOR PROVISION OF PEDESTRIAN CROSSING – LOVE LANE, RAYLEIGH

The Committee considered the report of the Area Manager, County Highways providing Members with a feasibility study of a pedestrian crossing in Love Lane, Rayleigh.

Members in favour of the recommendation observed that it would be difficult to site a pedestrian crossing near the school because an incline in the road would make it difficult for motorists to see a crossing.

Those not in favour of the recommendation felt that it was contrary to this Authority's policy to provide crossings outside schools.

Members observed that unauthorised parking on this road created a potential hazard and that the planting of trees and placement of bollards might deter motorists from parking there.

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It was further noted that crossings and yellow lines were ineffective without enforcement by the Police. Safety around schools was a key issue in the Crime and Disorder Strategy.

Officers confirmed that money was set aside in the capital programme budget for crossings. Any funds not used for the provision of a crossing in Love Lane would go into the crime and disorder budget.

On a motion moved by the Chairman it was:-

Resolved

- (1) That the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee considers whether or not a crossing facility be provided in Love Lane, Rayleigh.
- (2) That a sum of up to £7,000 be used to enhance the safety of children in Love Lane.
- (3) That a letter be sent to the Love Lane School about parents' bad road practice in the vicinity of the school and urging the school to heed the advice of the County Council Road Safety Officer.
- (4) That a letter be sent to the Police expressing concern that there is a lack of enforcement around schools with respect to parking, stopping and waiting restrictions and requesting that the Police present a report to the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee detailing how they would deal with it. (HPS/County Highways)

144 JUNCTION AT HIGH STREET/WEBSTERS WAY, RAYLEIGH

The Committee considered the report of the Area Manager, County Highways considering the findings of a study into traffic movements at the junction of High Street and Websters Way, including the current arrangements at Church Street/High Street, and proposing that further work be undertaken to identify improvements.

It was noted that, although the camera on the traffic lights was essential, it was difficult for motorists to get out of the Church Road junction as a result of the positioning of the pedestrian crossing.

Resolved

- (1) That the consultant's finding on the persistent red light running on the High Street approach be referred to the County Council's safety camera team for appropriate action, with a report back to a future meeting of the Environmental Services Committee.
- (2) That the peak time congestion in Websters Way be modelled and that the options for improvement be costed and reported to the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee for consideration. (County Highways)

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145 DEVELOPMENT CONTROL/BUILDING CONTROL BEST VALUE REVIEW – FINAL REPORT

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning Services detailing the final conclusions of the Best Value Review into Development Control and Building Control services and presenting a detailed action plan for service improvement.

On a motion called by Cllr Mrs M J Webster and seconded by Cllr K A Gibbs, it was:-

Resolved

That the development control/building control service action plan be considered by the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 18 April, with a report to Full Council on 25 April. (HPS)

146 MANAGEMENT OF RADIOACTIVE WASTE – CONSULTATION PAPER

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Housing, Health & Community Care suggesting a response to the Government's consultation paper detailing proposals for developing a policy for managing solid radioactive waste in the UK.

Resolved

That the responses detailed within this report are made to the consultation paper "Managing Radioactive Waste Safely". (HHHCC)

147 WASTE CONSORTIUM SECRETARIAT ARRANGEMENTS

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) seeking to gain Members' views on the future secretariat arrangements for the Consortium of Essex Waste Collection Authorities.

On a motion called by the Chairman it was:-

Resolved

- (1) That this authority does not have the resources to undertake secretariat duties for the Consortium of Essex Waste Collection Authorities.
- (2) That the current Secretariat be asked to provide costing proposals for the provision of a semi permanent secretariat, to be considered by the Policy & Finance Committee. (CD(F&ES)).

148 ABANDONED VEHICLES ON STRATEGIC ROUTES

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) seeking Member approval to delegate authority to Essex County Council to deal with abandoned vehicles on strategic routes within the District.

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There was strong support for the recommendation, particularly given the increased number of abandoned vehicles throughout the District.

There was general concern that there was a long delay in obtaining information relating to abandoned vehicles from DVLC and in removing vehicles which posed a real danger to the general public.

On a motion moved by the Chairman it was:-

Resolved

- (1) That the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee examine the processes involved in removing abandoned vehicles on highways.
- (2) That the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) be authorised to delegate to Essex County Council the powers required to deal with abandoned vehicles on the strategic routes within the District.
(CD(F&ES))

The Meeting closed at 8.35 pm

Chairman _____

Date _____