

Central Area Committee – 20 September 2007

Minutes of the meeting of the **Central Area Committee** held on **20 September 2007** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr D G Stansby
Vice-Chairman: Cllr Mrs C A Weston

Cllr P A Capon
Cllr M R Carter
Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn

Cllr K H Hudson
Cllr J R F Mason
Cllr M G B Starke

ALSO PRESENT

Cllr B Hazelwood - Hockley Parish Council
Cllr Mrs M A Weir - Hawkwell Parish Council
Cllr Miss A Marriott - Hullbridge Parish Council
Cl J Walker - Essex Police

OFFICERS PRESENT

R Evans - Head of Environmental Services
J Bourne - Head of Community Services
J Bostock - Principal Committee Administrator

306 INITIAL BUSINESS

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs R Brown, Mrs L A Butcher, Mrs L M Cox and J Thomass.

Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Declarations of Interest

Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn declared a personal interest in the item on Youth Provision – Hawkwell/Hockley/Ashingdon by virtue of being a Hawkwell Parish Councillor.

307 COMMUNITY FORUM

Requests for information had been received in advance of the meeting and a document summarising these, together with officer responses, was circulated to all those present. A list of these, together with further questions received, is appended.

With regard to the question on a route for horses on the western side of Clements Hall it was noted that this was being dealt with on an urgent basis with account taken of all implications. Interested parties would be kept informed of progress and the arrangements for a site visit.

With regard to housing provision it was noted that any comments in the press related to observations by a political group. The Council had made no decisions about the distribution of housing, it being a matter that is subject to consultation with the publication of a revised version of the Council's draft Core Strategy policy document.

308 SPOTLIGHT ISSUES

(1) Update on Crime and Disorder in the Central Area

Chief Inspector Walker tabled a document setting out the issues raised by the Hawkwell, Hockley and Hullbridge Neighbourhood Action Panels.

Responding to questions, Chief Inspector Walker advised that:-

- In most debates views on the value of traffic calming measures are varied.
- The Police work closely with the County Council on campaigns related to speeding/traffic calming. The Traffic Department targets areas where there is a propensity for fatal accidents.
- Neighbourhood specialist officers had made a significant impact, particularly in their work with hard to reach groups. Bicycles had proved of particular value in terms of officer mobility.

During discussion it was noted that a number of Parish Councils held surgeries at which the public can speak with Police Officers. It was also noted that, whilst it can be investigated, a concern about difficulties being experienced by horse riders opposite New Hockley Hall Farm, Lower Road, Hockley, is likely to be a matter for the County Council. Reference was made to the poor condition of the land around the shopping parade at Hawkwell.

(2) Youth Provision – Hawkwell/Hockley/Ashingdon

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Community Services on the Youth Project being undertaken by Hawkwell Parish Council in partnership with Hockley and Ashingdon Parish Councils.

Members concurred with the suggestion of the Head of Community Services that activity on developing detailed proposals should include consultation with residents local to the Clements Hall site.

It was noted that Hawkwell Parish Council had now submitted written details of its indicative proposals for a shelter to District officers. It was anticipated that the shelter would be of value to dog-walkers as well as young people.

In hearing the views of some members of the public present at the meeting it was recognised that there are elements of concern about the degree of consultation undertaken and the propensity of a shelter arrangement to attract young people from various locations and exacerbate problems such as noise and incidences of under-age drinking. However, it was also recognised that the Police were supportive of proposals and that consultation with young people had established that many would appreciate the introduction of a non-structured facility such as a shelter.

The Committee noted that, at this stage, the report recommendation only sought an 'in principle' decision from the Executive Board relating to the release of land. Further activity would have to be undertaken in terms of factors such as whether any proposals comply with Planning requirements, further consultation needs and further consideration of written details received from Hawkwell Parish Council (including details relating to construction, location, future maintenance and insurance).

Recommended to the Executive Board that agreement in principle be given to the siting of a community shelter on the Clements Hall Recreation Fields. (HCS)

(3) Review of Polling Districts and Polling Stations

The Committee received the report of the Head of Information and Customer Services outlining proposals for the Polling Districts in the Central Area.

It was noted that since report publication it had been established that the SEETEC building on the Main Road, Hockley, was no longer available for use as a polling station for the Hockley West Polling District and that consideration was being given to alternative possibilities.

309 CENTRAL AREA UPDATE

The Committee received the Central Area update.

With regard to the item on publicity given to textile recycling, it was noted that Salvation Army collection bags were clearly marked and that collections covered the majority of densely populated areas. It was also noted that the clothes bank at Golden Cross, Hawkwell, is to remain.

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm.

Chairman

Date

If you would like these minutes in large print, braille or another language please contact 01702 546366.

Appendix

Question

Response

Cllr Sue Gunn (Ashingdon Parish Council)

Would it be possible to open a route for horses on the western side of Clements Hall to come out at Hawkwell Park Drive and join the Bridleway to Park Gardens?

This land is owned by Rochford District Council. A footpath previously allowed access to this area but was closed in order to deal with a youth nuisance issue and prevent access by motorbikes. Officers are investigating with Essex County Council the possibility of opening up a bridleway that could restrict motorbike use or the provision of an alternative permissive route. Further details will be given at the next meeting.

Mrs P A James, Hawkwell

(1) How many houses are you expecting to have built in Hawkwell?

(1) The Council has made no decisions about the distribution of housing – this will be a matter that is subject to consultation with the publication of a revised version of the Council's draft Core Strategy policy document, most likely in the New Year.

(2) Where exactly are the locations of the proposed developments?

(2) The Council has made no decisions about the location of new housing developments.

(3) Do we have to accept the numbers given, or can we like Rayleigh request a reduction in the number (which was successful)?

(3) The next round of consultation on the Council's Core Strategy will provide a formal opportunity to consider different options for the distribution of housing in the District.

(4) Do we have to accept an increase in the original figure that was given for Hawkwell, due to the fact that the excesses of Rayleigh have been divided between areas within Rochford District?

(4) Different suggestions have been made about the housing distribution. The draft Core Strategy document that was recently subject to public consultation suggested there might be 400 new dwellings in Hockley/Hawkwell. It has more recently been suggested that the distribution might be 365 dwellings in Hawkwell and 36 in Hockley. The next consultation on the Core Strategy will outline several options for residents to comment on.

Question

Response

(5) If we have to accept that some properties must be built in Hawkwell, can we, the residents of Hawkwell, state where we feel the properties should or should not be built when the planning applications are submitted to the planning department?

(5) Absolutely, that will be the purpose of the next round of consultation on the Core Strategy.

(6) Are the properties likely to be executive housing, family 3-4 bedroom properties, 2 bedroom starter homes, flats for singles or retirement, bungalows for retired. Are any properties likely to be social housing and if so what proportion of each?

(6) A detailed analysis of the requirements for different types of housing is being carried out and this will be used to inform the requirements for different types of housing, the number of affordable houses, etc.

(7) Is it proposed that any properties at all will be built on Green Belt land? If so, where?

(7) The Council has carried out an assessment of the capacity of the urban areas in the District to accommodate additional housing development. As a result, it is clear that a proportion of the new housing required will need to be built on land that is currently designated as green belt. No decisions have been made by the Council about the locations of new housing development, but options will be provided in the next consultation on the Core Strategy.

J Passfield, Hockley

Where are the 900 houses to be built now that Rayleigh District has been reduced by this amount?

Responses to questions from Mrs P A James relate.

CRA Edwards, Hockley

Is there an approved policy for planning permission to requests that seek to increase the number of dwellings/flats on a site by at least three fold?

A response will be provided at the next meeting.

Question

Response

Brian Guyett, Hockley

The recent RDC Review Committee Report made several recommendations about the need to improve youth facilities in the area in line with Government targets.

Review Committee recommendations are yet to be considered by the Executive Board.

A response will be provided at the next meeting.

The report to tonight's Committee (item 4.2) details virtually solely the activities being lead by Hawkwell Parish Council with no indication of RDC's own thinking and plans in this regard. Would the Committee please advise what action RDC will be taking to meet the recommendations of the Review Committee?