

West Area Committee – 17 June 2009

Minutes of the meeting of the **West Area Committee** held on **17 June 2009** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr J M Pullen

Cllr Mrs P Aves	Cllr D Merrick
Cllr C I Black	Cllr Mrs J A Mockford
Cllr Mrs J Dillnutt	Cllr R A Oatham
Cllr K A Gibbs	Cllr S P Smith
Cllr J E Grey	Cllr Mrs M J Webster
Cllr A J Humphries	Cllr P F A Webster
Cllr T Livings	

VISITING MEMBER

Cllr K H Hudson

ALSO PRESENT

Cllr D Sperring	- Rayleigh Town Council
Cllr A Matthews	- Rawreth Parish Council
L Harvey	- Essex County Highways

OFFICERS PRESENT

S Fowler	- Head of Information and Customer Services
S Scrutton	- Head of Planning and Transportation
S Worthington	- Committee Administrator

155 AREA COMMITTEE – INITIAL BUSINESS

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs C J Lumley and Mrs J R Lumley.

Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2009 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Appointment of Vice-Chairman

Cllr S P Smith was appointed Vice-Chairman.

At this point the Committee adjourned the formal meeting to move into the community forum to hear contributions from members of the public.

156 COMMUNITY FORUM

Questions raised during the Community Forum and the responses given are summarised in the appendix to the Minutes.

A resident conveyed her thanks to the Committee, and in particular, to Essex County Highways, for addressing previous concerns relating to the condition of the road surface along parts of Rawreth Lane; the worst affected areas had been re-surfaced, leading to an appreciable improvement.

At this point the Committee re-convened into formal session.

157 COUNTY HIGHWAYS LOCALISM

(1) Highways Localism – Role of the Area Committees

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning and Transportation outlining the new role of the Area Committees in dealing with highway issues through 'Localism'.

Resolved

That the Localism objectives for the Area Committee, as set out in the report, be noted. (HPT)

(2) Localism Programme of Works for 2009-10

The Committee considered the report of the County Highways Area Manager, South on the work programme under the Localism initiative for 2009/10. The report included a list of updates relating to highways issues raised at previous meetings of the West Area Committee.

In response to questions, the following points were noted:-

- Issues relating to weeds in rose beds in London Road, London Hill and Little Wheatley Chase, Rayleigh would be followed up with the District Council's contractors and an update provided at the next meeting.
- £1.7 million will be available to spend on maintenance, in 2009/10 and around £300,000 on minor schemes.
- Schemes included in this year's Localism programme were taken as a result of surveys that had been conducted around the District; Little Wheatley Chase was not shortlisted for road or pavement re-surfacing works in this current year. However, if any additional funding became available during the course of the year, these works would be considered again.

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- It was anticipated that the 3-way traffic signals at Rayleigh station would be replaced with 2-way signals from 22 June and these would remain in place for the next two weeks.
- Works were due to take place at Beeches Road/Watery Lane; signs had been put up already advertising these works.
- The costs of bollards to prevent vehicles parking up on the pavement at Rawreth recreation ground during the football season would be prohibitive.
- There were regular discussions involving Rochford District and County Highways officers about the problems associated with traffic crossing through Rochford and Rayleigh in order to get to Southend, bypassing the busy A127 and A13 roads; thus causing traffic flow problems within the Rochford District.
- A pedestrian crossing in Rawreth Lane would be forthcoming, funded from section 106 monies from Asda.
- County Highways hoped to complete the works detailed in appendix A to the report within this financial year.
- The indicative costs of the schemes listed in appendix A would be carefully monitored.
- Ward Councillors will be updated outside the meeting on progress with respect to the scheme to bring the unmade roads of Eastwood Rise, Rayleigh Avenue and Sandhill Road up to a standard that the County Council would be prepared to adopt. There had been a number of legal issues associated with the scheme, which would take some months to resolve.
- Care would be taken to ensure that, during forthcoming gas works in Rayleigh High Street notices display the correct information relating to road closures to minimise disruption to businesses.
- There was recognition from Essex County Cllr Hume (the County Cabinet Member) that Rochford District had not received the same level of highways funding as districts in the north of the county. Highways Localism offered Rochford District the opportunity to indicate clearly to County Cllr Hume how the Localism budget should be spent within the District.
- The re-surfacing of pavements in Rawreth Lane, opposite Laburnum Way had not been included in the scheme of works for the current financial year, but would be added to the list for consideration for next year's Localism budget.

- County engineers look at traffic accident statistics in terms of how many accidents occur at particular locations; measures were taken once there was a certain volume of accidents.

The County Highways officer noted a Member concern that junction improvements were needed at the entrance to Fairland Close, Rayleigh.

Particular reference was made to the need for Rochford District Council to support traders during the forthcoming closure of Rayleigh High Street as a result of the gas mains works.

Resolved

That the list of works proposed for implementation in 2009/10 for the West Area be agreed and that the programme of schemes to be considered for 2010/11 be noted. (Area Manager South, County Highways)

158 SPOTLIGHT ISSUES

(1) Proposed Continental Market for Rayleigh

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning and Transportation seeking views on options for hosting a continental market in Rayleigh town centre.

It was noted that, since publication of the report, another market operator had expressed interest in holding a continental market in Rayleigh.

In response to a Member enquiry as to whether an area in Websters Way, alongside Rayleigh Lanes might be used as an alternative location for a continental market, officers advised that this land was privately owned and, as such, the Council could not locate the market there. The landowners could be contacted to establish whether they would be agreeable to the land being used for a market, but there could be a charge made.

Officers confirmed, in response to Member enquiries about using the Market car park or part of Websters Way car park, that this would not be legally possible.

Responding to a Member concern about the cost implications, officers advised that the temporary road closure required for the recent continental market in Rochford had been borne by the market operator.

In response to a question relating to the potential loss of business for local businesses, officers advised that the Chamber of Trade had been consulted and fully supported this initiative as it was perceived that a continental market would attract more people into Rayleigh.

During debate of the two possible locations for the continental market, the majority of Members expressed the view that the top end of the High Street would be the best location; one Member voiced concern about closing the High Street to vehicles would cause difficulties for frail and elderly residents attempting to use the bus services in the town centre.

The County Highways officer emphasised that closing the High Street for two days would cause a lot of traffic disruption; County Highways would need to work hard to alleviate this.

Resolved

- (1) That it be deemed appropriate to hold a continental market in Rayleigh town centre.
- (2) That the top of the High Street, Rayleigh be deemed the most appropriate location for a continental market. (HPT)

159 WEST AREA UPDATE

The Committee received the West Area Update.

07/09 – Possibility of an Extension to Rawreth Car Park (Minute 28/09)

Officers confirmed that the District Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy was a 5-year strategy.

17/09 – Misuse of Alcohol and Drugs in Sweyne Park, Rayleigh (Minute 67/09)

Officers advised that they would raise with the Head of Environmental Services reports from residents of contractors driving into Sweyne Park and sitting down in the park without carrying out any works. The grass was very long within the park and needed attention and there was litter that needed to be cleared up.

The meeting closed at 8.47 pm.

Chairman

Date

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

Appendix

Mrs Dawson, Rayleigh

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| 1. Is there any possibility of having one or two bins installed in Little Wheatley Chase, Rayleigh? | This issue will be raised with the District Council's Recycling Team and an update provided at the next meeting. |
| 2. There is a speed notice at the end of Little Wheatley Chase. This is not lit up like others in the area and the post is not safe. | This will be investigated by County Highways and an update provided at the next meeting. |
| 3. Does restricted parking apply on Saturdays and Sundays and is it legal for 4-wheel drive cars to park on the footpath? This happens on Saturday and Sunday when the sports and social have football matches. | Parking restrictions apply at all times. It is illegal for 4-wheel drive vehicles to park on the pavements; residents should report any such cases to the Police. |
| 4. As a result of parked vehicles, the right hand side of the road in Little Wheatley Chase never gets swept so the weeds are growing in the gutters. | This will be investigated by County Highways and Rochford District Council officers and an update provided at the next meeting. |

Mr Hutchinson, Rayleigh

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| Can we start discussing the future plans for the recent acquisition of land "New England Wood to Flemmings Farm"? | <p>The ambition for the country park is to make it accessible for all users and we are in discussion with the County Council to form a pedestrian route through New England Wood. The County Council is also keen to establish a route for horse riders and cyclists from Grove Road/Connaught Road into the park and we are currently developing options.</p> <p>We are in the process of installing rabbit and deer fences to protect the new areas of tree planting, but the existing footpath near Edwards Hall Park will be fully integrated into this scheme.</p> |
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Concerns relating to difficulties arising from the positioning of these fences with respect to horse riders' access to Grove Woods bridle path would be referred to the Council's Head of Environmental Services.