

Environmental Services Committee – 6 March 2003

Minutes of the meeting of the **Environmental Services Committee** held on 6 March 2003 when there were present:

Cllr J E Grey (Vice-Chairman in the Chair)

Cllr Mrs T J Capon
Cllr R G S Choppen
Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn
Cllr A J Humphries

Cllr C R Morgan
Cllr C G Seagers
Cllr M G B Starke
Cllr Mrs M J Webster

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T E Goodwin and Mrs L Hungate

SUBSTITUTES

Cllr J M Pullen

OFFICERS PRESENT

R Crofts - Corporate Director (Finance & External Services)
S Scrutton - Head of Planning Services
S Clarkson - Head of Revenue and Housing Management
K Bristow - District Manager, Transportation and Operational Services,
Essex County Council
J Bostock - Principal Committee Administrator

105 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 February 2003 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Vice-Chairman.

106 ISSUES ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

(1) Twice yearly update from Essex County Council

The Committee considered the report of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the twice yearly update from Essex County Council.

Responding to Member questions on the 2002/03 locally determined programme, the District Manager advised as follows:-

- The reference under Residential Zones to the Rectory Road Estate, Hawkwell, should have been to Rectory Avenue. County Officers would work to achieve a better description of the extent of the proposed scheme. The consultation mechanism relating to residential zones had been completed with over 300 replies received for assessment.
- The works to Lower Road, Coventry Hill, Hullbridge were ongoing. It was hoped to eventually complete the whole length of the road. It was agreed that all sections should be included even where site levels presented engineering difficulties.
- The pram crossings at various locations were part of an ongoing scheme.
- The design of the zebra crossing at Ashingdon Road in the vicinity of Wedgwood Way had been completed and advertised – now waiting to see if any objections will be received.
- County Officers would review the design and locations of the “Kill your Speed” posters.

With regard to the review of Highways Maintenance and Capital Programme 2002/03, reference was made to the need for effective winter gritting, particularly at hilly areas in the District. It was noted that the County Portfolio Holder for Highways had indicated a willingness to consider special arrangements. Reference was made to the potential value to a more flexible approach when defining “major” and “minor” roads.

The Committee agreed a motion, moved by Councillor Mrs M J Webster and seconded by Councillor M G B Starke, relating to discussions with the County on the winter salting programme.

Responding to Member questions, the District Manager advised that:-

- The £36,000 identified for public rights of way related to the maintenance of existing rights of way.
- It would be possible to provide Members with the detail of the works associated with the allocation of £130,000 for the Ashingdon Road pedestrian/cycle route.
- It would be possible to provide Members with the names of the schools selected for the safer journeys to school programme.

Resolved

- (1) That the following additional schemes within the Locally Determined Programme 2002/03 be progressed, should funding become available:-
- 'Kill your Speed' programme - continue and monitor its effectiveness.
 - Oldbury Cottages, Southend Road, Great Wakering – to complete rural footway, providing link from the cottages to the junction with Star Lane.
 - Pedestrian facility (Zebra crossing) Ashingdon Road/Wedgwood Way, Ashingdon - advertising and construction.
 - Lower Road, Hullbridge - Coventry Hill footway works.
- (2) That the officers of the County Council be asked to discuss with the District Council the roads to be included in the District's winter salting programme (Area Manager - County Highways)

(2) Local Plans

The Committee considered the report of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on various replacement Local Plan draft Chapters.

Responding to Member questions, the Head of Planning Services advised that:-

- The view of Members on the importance of the tree protection aspects of the Plan was noted.
- Consideration would be given to producing an article for Rochford District Matters on the enforcement remedies associated with Tree Protection. This aspect would be raised at the forthcoming Member training session on Planning Enforcement.
- References within the Chapter on Vehicle Parking Standards related to the number of spaces not the size.

Resolved

That the proposed text of the chapters of the Rochford District Replacement Local Plan, including the change of the wording of

Policy HP10, as outlined in the report of the Head of Planning Services, be approved. (HPS)

107 PROPOSALS FOR DECRIMINALISATION OF ADDITIONAL PARKING OFFENCES OUTSIDE LONDON

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management on proposals received from the Department of Transport relating to the decriminalisation of certain additional offences outside London.

The Head of Revenue and Housing Management advised on the background to decriminalised parking enforcement and the associated financial arrangements. An action plan relating to decriminalisation within the District would be submitted to the April Meeting of the Committee.

The Head of Service also advised that:-

- The Council was usually inundated with applications for car parking patrol officer posts. He did not anticipate problems in recruitment to the posts emanating from decriminalisation.
- The car parks patrol team carried hand-held computers with photographic facilities.
- Under decriminalisation the Council would be able to respond to requests from School Governing Bodies or individuals about parking problems being experienced on yellow lines outside school premises.
- Patrol Officers currently had an element of electronic linkage with police computer records. Officers were reviewing ways of increasing the volume.

Resolved

That this Council fully supports the Department of Transport's proposals and expresses a preference for option 3, if practicably possible, in relation to parking on a pedestrian crossing. (HRHM)

108 ESSEX DISABLED PEOPLES ASSOCIATION TRAVEL VOUCHER SCHEME

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) on a request from Braintree District

Council that all Essex Authorities support the Essex Disabled Peoples Association Travel Voucher Scheme.

During debate it was recognised that there were a number of advantages to the scheme run by the District.

On a Motion moved by Councillor A J Humphries and seconded by Councillor M G B Starke, it was:-

Resolved

That, should it be requested to do so, this Council would express support for any funding bid made by the Essex Disabled People's Association, but reserves its position in respect of funding until such time as the bid for lottery funding is decided.

109 PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL PAPER RECYCLING COLLECTION AT GOLDEN CROSS, ASHINGDON - UPDATE

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) on various options available for providing additional paper recycling at the Golden Cross Shopping Parade, Ashingdon.

The Corporate Director advised that, since report publication, a further review of the location had established that it should be possible to locate four additional 1100 litre bins in one parking space. The cost of an appropriate barrier would be approximately £1000.

During debate a Member referred to the value of expanding the facility given that residents were interested and willing to be involved in recycling at this location.

Responding to Member questions, the Corporate Director advised that additional round costings had been supplied by the Council's contractor and included the disposal of paper.

On a motion, moved by Councillor Mrs H L A Glynn and seconded by Councillor C R Morgan, it was:-

Resolved

- (1) That an additional four 1100 litre containers be sited at the recycling facility, Golden Cross, Ashingdon, with the current fortnightly collection arrangement retained.

- (2) That the situation at Golden Cross be monitored for a period of 6 months, with a further report to the Committee should recycling capacity problems remain. (CD(F&ES))

110 REMOVAL OF CHEWING GUM UPDATE

Note: Councillor Mrs H L A Glynn declared a personal interest in this item by virtue of being a Hawkwell and Rochford Parish Councillor.

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director, (Finance & External Services) on the costs involved in purchasing specialist equipment for the chewing gum removal process.

The Corporate Director advised that, since report formulation, Rochford Parish Council had confirmed that they would be prepared to contribute 50% of the cost. Rayleigh Town Council had asked if contributions could be proportionate to Council Tax. Officers had advised Rayleigh that the policy was to contribute 50%.

Responding to Member questions, the Corporate Director advised that there were a number of chewing gum removal companies and that Officers would seek quotations once contributions had been finalised.

Resolved

- (1) That, in view of the financial outlay involved, an external specialist company be used to undertake any future chewing gum removal cleansing rather than the Council purchasing a machine.
- (2) That the cleansing of the Town Centre areas be undertaken on a twice yearly basis where the relevant Town/Parish Council has agreed to contribute 50% of the cost. (CD(F&ES))

111 MINUTES OF THE TAXI LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management on the Meeting of the Taxi Licensing Sub-Committee held on 30 January 2003.

Responding to Member questions, the Head of Revenue and Housing Management advised on the nature of the preliminary Court Hearing scheduled for 18 March. It was noted that the Taxi Licensing Sub-Committee would be meeting on 19 March to discuss the outcome of the Hearing.

Resolved

- (1) That the proposals for fare changes be maintained as agreed by the Council pending the Court's determination of the appeal scheduled for initial hearing on 18 March 2003.
- (2) That the schedule of proposed charges, as attached to the Sub-Committee minutes, be approved and advertised. (HRHM)

The Meeting closed at 9.01pm.

Chairman

Date