

East Area Committee – 16 January 2008

Minutes of the meeting of the **East Area Committee** held on **16 January 2008** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr C G Seagers

Cllr Mrs T J Capon
Cllr J P Cottis
Cllr T G Cutmore

Cllr Mrs S A Harper
Cllr Mrs B J Wilkins

ALSO PRESENT

Cllr P A Capon	-	Stambridge Parish Council
Cllr V Newby	-	Canewdon Parish Council
Cllr R A Pearson	-	Essex County Council
Cllr Mrs P Shaw	-	Ashingdon Parish Council
Mr B Summerfield	-	Sutton Parish Council
Cllr D Whittingham	-	Paglesham Parish Council
L Harvey	-	Essex County Council

OFFICERS PRESENT

Y Woodward	-	Head of Finance, Audit and Performance Management
J Bourne	-	Head of Community Services
A Law	-	Solicitor
P McKenna	-	Woodlands and Environmental Officer
M Power	-	Committee Administrator

21 AREA COMMITTEE – INITIAL BUSINESS

Apologies For Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs T E Goodwin (Rochford District Council), K J Gordon (Rochford District Council), Mrs M S Vince (Rochford Parish Council), M J Steptoe (Barling Magna Parish Council) and B Wright (Great Wakering Parish Council).

Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Declarations of Interest

Cllrs P A Capon and Mrs T J Capon each declared a personal interest in item 4.3 by virtue of being residents of Stambridge.

22 COMMUNITY FORUM

A written question relating to parking issues in central Rochford had been submitted by Mr D Saunders of Rochford. A copy of this and the officer response given at the meeting is appended.

A question had also been received from Mr B Efde of Essex Flood Forum on flooding issues. Mr Efde was advised that the question would be referred to appropriate officers within the District Council and that an answer would be included in the update at the next meeting of the East Area Committee. Mr Efde advised that there was now funding available for a free flood check and search for all residents and that he could be contacted in this respect.

The following verbal issues were raised:-

- Great Wakering Parish Council requested hard-standing be placed at the bus stop in Star Lane, by the industrial estate. Lyn Harvey advised that the Parish could include this on the list of items in the Local Development scheme for County Highways.
- Drainage problems had been identified since the resurfacing last year causing water retention at the low-lying kerbs along Great Wakering High Street. The kerbs now flooded, which posed a danger to cyclists. It was suggested that the Parish Council takes photographs of the areas in question. The area would be investigated.
- There was also serious flooding in the High Street, Great Wakering on the corner by the garage, by the roundabout. The issue would be examined.
- Stambridge Parish Council raised a concern regarding large lorries travelling to Baltic Wharf at speed along Brays Lane via Stambridge. Lyn Harvey replied that weight restriction signs had been erected in Stambridge Road. However, the enforcement authority was the Police, and not County Highways. Essex County Council Trading Standards had begun a programme of enforcing weight restriction on roads across the county and funding was available to monitor specific sites on a weekly basis. Watery Lane and Beeches Road are already on the list. Lyn Harvey will ask for Stambridge Road to be included for future monitoring.
- Lyn Harvey reported the results of the classified vehicle count for westbound and eastbound traffic along Creeksea Ferry Road, Wallasea, which had taken place on 7/2/06 between 7 am and 7 pm, as follows:-

Westbound - 327 vehicles, of which 81 were lorries over 1.5 tonnes
Eastbound - 281 vehicles, of which 72 were lorries over 1.5 tonnes.

The road was also in need of maintenance but is bounded by ditches not

belonging to Essex County Council. Cllr Hume, the portfolio holder for Highways and Transportation, had visited the area to view the problems at first hand. In response to a question, Lyn Harvey stated that the road does not meet County policy for the introduction of a speed limit beyond the existing speed limit.

- The matter had been raised with Communities and Local Government (CLG). A suggestion came from Members that part of the anticipated RSPB investment of £12m in the area could be used to improve the road, as the route was likely to become busier in the future.
- It was suggested that the County Council be asked to reassess provision of buses to provide a bus service from Great Wakering earlier in the mornings and later at night to enable residents who were employed outside the village to get to and from work.
- County Cllr R A Pearson advised that a petition had been sent to the Essex County Council Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transportation requesting the establishment from April of a bus service along New Road in Great Wakering to Foulness. The route was considered too dangerous to walk.

23 SPOTLIGHT ISSUES

(1) Update on Highways Matters within the East Area.

Lyn Harvey stated that although funding in the current financial year was at an end, County Highways would endeavour to identify highways issues around the District that needed attention, but would welcome information regarding any specific highways in the East Area.

As part of the 2007/8 Locally Determined programme a new footway is to be constructed at Clay Street, Barling Road.

Schemes for the Locally Determined Programme 2008/9 should be submitted by the end of February.

Responding to questions, Lyn Harvey advised:-

- That an issue of non-payment to two residents for land purchased by Essex County Council when building a path built along Lambourne Hall Road in Canewdon would be referred to the Legal Department at Essex County Council.
- That the issue of dropped kerbs in outlying villages for mobility scooters could be included by the parishes in the list for County Highways.

(2) **Update on the Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park.**

The Committee received a presentation detailing the background history to the development of the country park facility at Cherry Orchard. An OS map showing both the existing land in the Park and the proposed extension was distributed. The consultative process was continuing to identify the facilities that various user groups would like to see in the park. Questionnaires had been completed by residents throughout the District via Rochford District Matters and website surveys.

The Country Park was now well used and the first phase of development had been successfully completed. It had been identified on the District Council's Core Strategy that there was potential to extend the park to the west and east of the current boundaries. A planning application for change of use to a Country Park and for vehicular access from the B1013 had recently been granted. An outline design would be presented to Members for their input and discussion would continue to take place with the various user groups.

Responding to questions, Patrick McKenna advised:-

- That no decision had been made regarding the future of the gun club that was located in Section B of the proposed extension, and meetings would take place with Police to ascertain the suitability of having a rifle range in the country park and also with members of the club.
- Planning consent had been granted for the car park, which would be completed within three years.
- The consultation process would allow for local ward councillors to be involved in the design process. It was agreed that before the final design was presented to Council for approval, it would be included as an agenda item for consideration by the East Area Committee.
- County Cllr R A Pearson advised that in the 1980s the old civic amenity centre at Great Wakering had been earmarked for leisure pursuits. He asked that this matter be investigated.
- The Committee gave its thanks to Patrick McKenna and Council staff for their work on the Country Park.

(3) **Public Footpaths 1 and 3, Stambridge – proposed footpath diversions**

Angela Law, Rochford District Council's Solicitor, provided an update on an application by Mr Mark Fry, the owner of Stewards Elm Farm Stambridge, to divert Public Footpaths 1 and 3. An application had been refused in 2006 due to concerns from local residents. All concerns had now been addressed and both Essex County Council and Stambridge Parish Council supported the application.

The applicant, Mr Fry, and his Land Agent, Mr Wood, were present at the meeting and available to provide clarification if necessary.

Before the item was discussed, it was confirmed that discussion of the item would not create a conflict of interest with the District Councillors' role on the District Council's Development Control Committee, should the item appear at this committee.

The following points were raised:-

- As it seemed that the proposed new footpath would be longer than the existing one, some residents had advised the Ward Member, Cllr Mrs T J Capon, that they were not in support of the proposal. As a result, Cllr Mrs Capon did not support the application.
- Member concern was expressed that advice had been given by Essex County Council at the time of the application to site the footpath in its existing position that it was illegal to move a footpath if doing so resulted in it being extended in length by more than a set maximum. As this application proposed an extension to the footpath, Cllr P A Capon requested confirmation from Essex County Council that the law in this respect had changed. It was noted that in item 6.1 legal implications would be considered prior to the confirmation of the Order.
- The applicant's land agent advised that the existing footpath caused issues that affected the way the landowner could manage his land. Under the proposals the public would have a dedicated path and improved disabled and pushchair access.

Cllr Mrs T J Capon wished her objection to the proposal to be noted.

Resolved

- (1) That subject to the applicant bearing the cost of any necessary accommodation works and all the Council's costs and expenses recoverable under the Local Government (recovery of costs for Public Path Orders) Regulations 1993 as amended, the proposal to divert Footpath 3 and part extinguishment of Footpath 1 as shown on the attached plan be approved.
- (2) That the Head of Legal Services be authorised to take all necessary steps to secure the making and confirmation of Public Path Diversion Orders to secure the above proposals under the terms of section 119 of the Highways Act 1980.

24 EAST AREA UPDATE

The Committee received the East Area update.

Speed of Traffic in South Street and West Street in Rochford. (08/07)

Lyn Harvey provided the results of the speed checks:-

South Street: 31mph to 32 mph

West Street: 29 mph to 30mph.

These figures, which were an average taken at the 85th percentile, were considered to be acceptable and, as a result, no action would be taken.

In response to a Member question regarding the possibility of including, as a conservation issue, a request for reducing the speed limit in South Street and West Street to 20mph in the Local Development programme, Lyn Harvey advised that this would generally only be considered if the speed limit could be self enforcing and to address accidents, for example, in the vicinity of schools.

Obstruction of the public footpath through the boat yard, Paglesham East End (11/07)

Lyn Harvey advised that letters had been sent to the relevant people.

Renstatement of the 'slow' sign on the Southend Road, Great Wakering, on the approach to the entrance to Morley's Nursery (20/07)

The proposed reinstatement would be completed very soon.

Litter around the new Somerfield development in Rochford (22/07)

It was commented that an improvement had been seen.

Street lighting in Sutton Road, particularly from Warwick Drive to Purdeys Way (26/07)

The issue would be pursued with County Highways and referred back to the area committee.

Pedestrian Refuge outside the Co-op in Great Wakering (29/07)

Lyn Harvey advised that the possibility of removing the pedestrian refuge could be included by the parish in the Local Development Plan for 2008/9. Any scheme would have to be considered in conjunction with the need to provide a facility for pedestrians.

Drainage problems at the junction of Little Wakering Hall Lane with High Street, Great Wakering (31/07)

Lyn Harvey advised that the issue was being addressed.

Wheelie bin, Great Waking Community Association (36/07)

The Parish Councillor advised that the Community Association was a charitable organisation and it had paid for a large domestic refuse bin, which in the past had been collected and which was now missing. The Head of Community Services was concerned that the Community Association may not be located on the domestic collection round and advised that although it was a Charity, it may well be still considered as trade waste. He advised that he would get confirmation as to whether it could be classified as domestic collection.

The meeting closed at 9.13 pm.

Chairman

Date

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

Appendix

Question

D Saunders, Rochford

Why are traders in Ship Lane, North Street and Roche Close in Rochford allowed to park their vehicles unattended for extended periods of time and nothing done about it?

Response

Roche Close is privately owned and is not subject to a Traffic Regulation Order – therefore, the double yellow lines cannot be enforced by Rochford Council's Parking Attendants.

As regards, North Street and Old Ship Lane, these streets are patrolled regularly and parking tickets are issued very frequently – in fact, since October 2004, 722 Penalty Charge Notices have been issued to vehicles parked along North Street contravening Traffic Regulation Orders.

B Efde, Essex Flood Forum

1. Why doesn't the Council ask the Environment Agency (EA) to explain the inconsistencies in the various statements that it has made over the years, as follows:-

- Bill Forbes, Area Manager, EA states 1-200 (0.5% risk/annum) (17 April 2001)
- Paul Woodcock, Regional Director EA stated 1-50 (2% risk/annum) (18 December 2003)
- John Macrea Team Lead Enforcement EA stated 1-5 (20% risk/annum) 20 Jan 2004)
- Mr Bloomfield EA undertakes to correct maps sold to solicitors and conveyances (1 Nov 2004)

Question	Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr Bloomfield seconded by Thames Gateway states 1-200 (0.5% risk/annum) (Nov 2006)• Mr Bloomfield states there will be no flood for a thousand years (23 Jan 2007)• Mr Bloomfield states that Great Wakering is protected by a 1-20 Standard (27 Nov 2007)	
2. What happened to the promise to :-	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve the existing defence to reduce the flood-risk• Regulate tidal exchange• Secondary embankment around Great Wakering• Secondary defence set back behind the original defence line?	
3. What reason has the Council got for refusing to put the risks on the Council's register in accordance with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.	