

East Area Committee – 12 September 2007

Minutes of the meeting of the **East Area Committee** held on **12 September 2007** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr C G Seagers
Vice-Chairman: Cllr T E Goodwin

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 Mrs M S Vince - Rochford Parish Council
Cllr D Whittingham - Paglesham Parish Council
Cllr B Wright - Great Wakering Parish Council
Cllr R Pearson - Essex County Council
S Thallon - Essex County Council
Insp A Parkman - Essex Police

OFFICERS PRESENT

J Bourne - Head of Community Services
S Fowler - Head of Information and Customer Services
Y Woodward - Head of Finance, Audit and Performance Management
S Worthington - Committee Administrator

298 CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the emergency evacuation procedures.

299 AREA COMMITTEE – INITIAL BUSINESS

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr K J Gordon, Cllr Miss P Shaw (Ashingdon Parish Council) and Mr B Summerfield (Sutton Parish Council).

Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

300 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 written questions received at the meeting, with responses, are appended to the Minutes.

In response to a query relating to the process associated with public questions for the East Area Committee meeting, officers confirmed that any questions submitted within seven working days of an Area Committee meeting would receive a written response at the meeting. Publicity for the Area Committees would be reviewed with a view to making this clear.

It was further noted that any letters of detail associated with questions to be raised at the Area Committee should in future be copied to all Members of the Area Committee. The Chairman indicated that he would raise these matters with the Executive Board, as appropriate.

301 SPOTLIGHT ISSUES

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

Inspector Parkman provided a summary sheet of reported crime statistics for the East Area, which was circulated to all those present. It was noted that reported ASB (anti-social behaviour) offences had increased from 83 in August 2006 to 99 in August 2007, which were predominantly attributable to the Rochford area. It was difficult to speculate as to reasons for this increase, given that there had been a steady increase in reported offences in the previous 4 months. There had been a reduction in crime of 15% in the Rochford District as a whole compared to the previous year.

During the period from July 2006 – July 2007 there had been 19 recorded drugs-related offences across the East area, 18 of which related to class C drugs and 1 of which related to a class B drug.

Inspector Parkman advised, in response to a question raised at the last meeting, that Mason's Bar in Rochford had ceased to trade. Furthermore, the area behind the premises about which intelligence relating to drug dealing had been received, had been fenced and secured. The Police would therefore be taking no further action at the present time.

In response to questions, the following was noted:-

- ASB crime classifications were determined by the Home Office; there was currently no classification for cycling-related offences.
- It could be possible to record any parking-related offences under 'vehicle nuisance/inappropriate use of vehicles' or under 'rowdy/nuisance behaviour'.

- It would be inappropriate to examine in detail the issue of youths congregating in the vicinity of the Co-Op in Great Wakering, as it was a complicated issue that would be better explored in detail at the next appropriate neighbourhood action panel meeting.
- The Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership would be advised of the need to publicise the next meeting of the Partnership.
- 12 Community Support Officers were operating in the Rochford District, with 2 dedicated to Great Wakering. There was, in addition, a named specialist officer, PC Steve Thomas, for the Great Wakering, who was supported by 30 other Police Constables operating throughout the district.

(2) Update on Essex County Council Policy on Business Waste at Civic Amenity Sites

Ms S Thallon provided an update to the meeting on County Council policy with respect to business waste at civic amenity sites. Business waste was not currently disposed of at any civic amenity sites because domestic and business waste had different classifications and different Government targets; existing sites were unable to cater for these differences.

The following was noted:-

- Householders pay for the collection of domestic waste via Council Tax and were therefore not charged for using civic amenity sites, with the exception of the Stock Road site, although this charge could be claimed back from the County Council.
- Council Tax payments do not cover the collection and disposal of business waste, the costs of which should be paid for as part of the business running costs.
- Civic amenity sites were already pushed to capacity and were not large enough to be able to cope with business waste. If an appropriate site could be found instead of the Castle Road site, the County Council would be prepared to consider the possibility of providing facilities for business waste. Such a site would need sufficient space for a separate entrance for trade waste in order to keep trade and domestic waste separate on site.
- The Rochford District Council website provided details of a wide range of waste solutions for small businesses.

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

- An alternative civic amenity site was being sought to the East of Rayleigh, in order to replace the Castle Road site, which was working at an unreasonable rate.
- The County Council was in the process of developing a county waste strategy, which was actively looking at alternatives to landfill. County policy was to re-use and recycle, but the County Council did not support the use of incinerators.
- There were considerable financial penalties for Local Authorities in the event of them exceeding their landfill targets, currently £24 per tonne, and set to increase to £26 per tonne.

(3) Update on Great Wakering Youth Provision

The Committee considered the report of the District Council's Head of Community Services providing an update on the progress of the project to provide additional facilities for the young people of Great Wakering. It was noted that Rochford District Council and Great Wakering Parish Council had allocated funds within current budgets aimed at increasing facilities for young people in Great Wakering. At a meeting in July a broad range of options were discussed, including metal containers for conversion into a meeting area, teen shelters and a new, permanent building adjacent to the sports centre, the latter of which rough costings had been obtained.

At a subsequent meeting in August there was a general consensus that the metal containers offered a cheaper, more flexible solution as a meeting place for youths than that of a permanent building. The option of a skateboard park was also discussed, as considerable interest in such a facility had been expressed by youths. The District Council and Youth Service would be finalising proposals for a consultation programme. It was anticipated that a report outlining proposals finalised in light of a consultation exercise would be taken to the District Council's Executive Board in November.

It was noted that Great Wakering Parish Council could not support the proposal for a skateboard park unless this was to be funded by the District Council.

In response to a concern raised that interest in the skateboard park had been raised primarily by Barling youths, officers stressed the need for proper consultation with young people in the Great Wakering area.

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

- The consultation on proposals would also include local residents and would give careful consideration to the best location for youth meeting places, taking into consideration proximity to residential

properties and residents and young people's views.

- Partners involved in this project were keen to introduce facilities for young people as soon as possible. It was, however, important that facilities were ones that youngsters wanted and would use. The District Council would analyse the success of other local authority projects to see whether these might be something that could be adapted for Great Wakering.
- Young people would be consulted on how the metal containers might be converted and what should be placed inside them in order to instil a sense of ownership by the youngsters.
- The Primary School would be unable to provide a youth facility in the same way that happened in the past, given past alcohol-related incidents at the youth club. The old brickfields, similarly, could not be used as a youth facility, as it was privately owned land.
- Final costings for the metal containers option would contain any element that may be required for the management of the facility; it was recognised that such facilities had to be properly supervised.
- The containers offered a great flexibility of uses, which could include the mentoring of youths by older people; the Youth Service had indicated its willingness to become actively involved in the project.
- It was anticipated that, if proposals were agreed by the Executive Board in November, metal container meeting places and / or teen shelters could be put in place relatively quickly, within the current financial year.
- An update on the meeting scheduled for 27 September for partners involved in the project would be brought back to the next meeting.

Resolved

That the contents of the report be noted. (HCS)

(4) Review of Polling Districts and Polling Stations

The Committee considered the report of the District Council's Head of Information and Customer Services outlining proposals for polling districts in the East Area.

It was noted that it was proposed to retain the Mission Hall in Paglesham as a polling station, as there was suitable disabled access available. The report proposed merging polling districts RCE and RCF and to use Barling Magna Primary School as the polling station.

It was noted, during debate, that Canewdon Village Hall had reasonable disabled access.

302 EAST AREA UPDATE

Green Waste Collection, Canewdon

It was observed that, following the last meeting, the contractors had arrived for the Saturday green waste collection in Canewdon.

Overgrown Footpath between Stambridge Hall and Stambridge School

It was observed that the overgrown hedge encroaching on the footpath in Stambridge had still not been tackled and had lead to pedestrians being forced to walk along a 60mph stretch of road in order to access the school. The issue had been raised with County Highways who had said that the hedge would be cut within this week.

Speeding Traffic down West Street and South Street, Rochford

It was observed that pedestrians felt vulnerable walking down South Street, because of the narrowness of the pavements. It was suggested that possible solutions could include the introduction of a 20mph speed limit or of a chicane, limiting traffic-flow to one way. It was further felt that the new layout in North Street had resulted in an improvement to vehicle speeds.

Cable Visible in Ditch Next to Footway by the Village Hall, Canewdon

It was emphasised that the cable could not have been buried in the ditch, as the area had been demolished. It was agreed that County Highways would be asked to provide an update.

The meeting closed at 9.25 pm.

Chairman

Date

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