

West Area Committee – 26 January 2011

Minutes of the meeting of the **West Area Committee** held on **26 January 2011** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr S P Smith
Vice-Chairman: Cllr Mrs J A Mockford

| | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Cllr Mrs P Aves | Cllr D Merrick |
| Cllr C I Black | Cllr R A Oatham |
| Cllr Mrs J Dillnutt | Cllr Mrs M J Webster |
| Cllr C J Lumley | Cllr P F A Webster |
| Cllr Mrs J R Lumley | |

ALSO PRESENT

| | | |
|---------------------|---|-----------------------|
| Cllr Mrs M Spencer | - | Rayleigh Town Council |
| A/Sergeant S Joynes | - | Essex Police |
| J Hull | - | Trading Standards |

OFFICERS PRESENT

| | | |
|------------|---|---|
| S Fowler | - | Head of Customer and Information Services |
| S Scrutton | - | Head of Planning and Transportation |
| M Power | - | Committee Administrator |

28 AREA COMMITTEE – INITIAL BUSINESS

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs J E Grey, A J Humphries and T Livings and Cllr Mrs L Hopkins, Rawreth Parish Council

Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to noting that Cllr Mrs L Hopkins (Rawreth Parish Council) and Cllr Mrs M Spencer (Rayleigh Town Council) were in attendance.

29 SPOTLIGHT ISSUES

(1) Update on Crime and Disorder in Rawreth and Rayleigh

Acting Sergeant Steve Joynes, Essex Police, provided an update on crime and disorder in Rawreth and Rayleigh.

It was noted that Rochford and Castle Point policing response units and the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) have moved to Rayleigh Police Station, although neighbourhood policing teams will be maintained throughout the District.

Overall, a reduction in all crime had been seen across the Rawreth and Rayleigh area in 2010, when compared with the same period in 2009. There have been 13 burglaries in this area since the start of October and an increase in door to door sales could potentially be linked to any increases in the number of burglaries in particular wards. Levels of anti-social behaviour (ASB) were generally down across the Rawreth and Rayleigh area. A/Sergeant Joynes advised that the Rayleigh Neighbourhood Action Panel met on the second Tuesday of each month in Rayleigh Town Council Chamber. This was a useful forum for residents to raise any specific problems with the neighbourhood policing teams.

A/Sergeant Joynes provided information on items on the West Area Committee update, as follows:-

07/10 Speed check operations at the junction of Downhall Road and Hambro Hill, Rayleigh

Research is being undertaken by the police to ascertain the locations where the speeding is worst and at what times, with a view to providing a solution, within health and safety considerations.

08/10 Disturbance caused by motorcycle riders in the vicinity of the Allotments in Kenilworth Gardens, Rayleigh

The Police have contacted residents and the issue seems now to have been resolved. The area will continue to be monitored.

09/10 Request for a police presence in the vicinity of the former off-licence in London Road, Rayleigh

The managing agents of the property have advised Essex Police that the property will be demolished later this year.

In response to questions the following was noted:-

- The Police are recruiting volunteers to be involved in a potential Community Speed Watch campaign in the Rayleigh area. No financial contribution from the community groups would be sought. Community Speed Watch is a traffic monitoring scheme that is co-ordinated by Essex Police and managed and run by volunteers in the community.
- Essex Police are working with Trading Standards to try to resolve the issue of enforcement of the weight restriction limit for heavy vehicles on the bridge on Watery Lane, Rawreth. A meeting was scheduled on site on 27 January at Watery Lane/Beeches Road to discuss the issue. Work in this area is also a priority for the Neighbourhood Action Panel (NAP) (called Operation Red Sail).
- It was suggested that it would be useful if information about the Essex Police Beat Surgeries always remained in the same location on the

website, although it was appreciated that this was determined by headquarters.

- The Neighbourhood Policing team office contact number and email can be found on the Essex Police website. Police officers could also be contacted via their mobile phone numbers when they were out of the office. The Police work in partnership with Rochford District Council around anti-social behaviour issues and the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Reduction officer, Dave Sargent, could be contacted in this respect.

(2) Presentation from Essex County Council Trading Standards

The Committee was pleased to welcome John Hull of Essex County Council Trading Standards. Mr Hull delivered a presentation on the service provided by Trading Standards and the main areas covered by its work, as follows:-

- Doorstep trading/cold calling (the problem/what can be done/who to contact). Mr Hull explained that 'Doorstep regulations' give consumers certain contractual rights if contracts are signed at their home. He gave the Consumer Direct telephone number: 08454 040506.
- Age restricted goods (what they are/the problems/what can be done). The enforcement of the sale of age restricted goods depends heavily on intelligence received from the public. Resources can be focused in specific areas and test purchasing carried out in premises nearby. A series of test purchases were carried out in the Rayleigh area at the beginning of January: underage sales discovered during these test purchases had been dealt with.
- Buy with confidence – trader approved scheme (why an approved scheme/benefits to consumers/benefits to businesses/the nature of trading standards approval). Trading Standards are now forging links with the Shop at My Local scheme established by Rochford District Council.

Responding to questions, Mr Hull advised that:-

- Some businesses apply to join the Buy with Confidence scheme and others are recommended by customers. Trading Standards will target a particular business group by mail shot from time to time. An example of this would be the targeting of aerial installers across the county, in anticipation of the forthcoming digital switchover in Essex.
- Car clamping is not an area in which Trading Standards has enforcement powers.
- Businesses that have been approved under the Buy with Confidence scheme are given feedback cards that can be returned to Trading Standards. Trading Standards will also monitor any complaints received about a business that is on the scheme. There is a mediation service run

by the Buy With Confidence scheme, which can be used if a dispute cannot easily be resolved following the normal complaints procedure.

- Trading Standards will contact Rayleigh Town Council direct in respect of including information on test purchasing in their newsletter.
- A suggestion was made that information about Trading Standards be added to the Rochford District Council website.

The Chairman thanked Mr Hull for his contribution.

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

30 COMMUNITY FORUM

Questions raised during the Community Forum and the responses given are set out in the appendix to these Minutes.

Questions received at the September meeting of the Committee during the Community Forum and the responses given are set out in the appendix to these Minutes.

An update was provided on the question relating to the flooding issues at Sweyne Park allotment site and causeway leading to the site and a drainage plan of the area was distributed. It was advised that an investigation revealed that an area of the existing underground pipe work was found to have collapsed. This collapse was preventing full flow from the new and existing surface water drains into the public drainage system. The collapsed pipe has now been repaired and the drainage system appears to be working satisfactorily. However, this unexpected flooding has delayed the car park re-surfacing works but this is still anticipated to be completed by the end of the month, as indicated in the update.

The Committee reconvened into formal session.

31 WEST AREA UPDATE

The Committee received the West Area update.

15/10 Emergency Services Bollards at Swallow Close, Rayleigh

It was reported that the bollards were still broken and one was missing. Wimpey Homes, who had constructed the estate, had responded to a letter from the Council advising they will continue to make efforts to establish their liabilities. Now that communication had been established, the Council would continue to press for a resolution to the matter. Cllr C J Lumley would be kept informed of progress.

H24/09 Adoption of Eastwood Rise and Sandhill Road, Rayleigh

A tree planting ceremony to mark the completion of the reconstruction of the above street works would take place on 1 February 2011.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

Chairman

Date

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

Appendix

Question

Response

Mr A Stone, Rayleigh

I am the resident who originally raised the issue of a dedicated slip road from the A1245 to the A127 at the Fairglens interchange. In August I was delighted to see work in progress on widening the slip road as I thought my suggestion had been fully adopted. I did wonder, however, why the painting of lines to create a dedicated lane had not been included.

My delight turned to total dismay and frustration when I read in the minutes of the last meeting that, "a separate lane was not achievable due to the cost of moving utility apparatus".

The whole point of raising this was to achieve a dedicated lane, eliminating the need for drivers on the A1245 to give way to other traffic when turning left.

If County Highways was aware of this additional cost I would suggest they should not have bothered to spend vast amounts of money on a scheme that has provided no extra benefit to drivers and more importantly no improvement in road safety.

The dedicated lane would have increased traffic flow from the roundabout to an adjacent dedicated route along the slip road. This slip road is capable

The work that has been undertaken recently at the Fairglens interchange was as a direct result of the Road Safety Audit for the works completed in summer 2009, where it was found that the existing alignment from the roundabout to the Southend bound slip road to the A127 was sub-standard. This did not form part of the original works and therefore it was agreed to carry out this adjustment during the quieter traffic period of this summer.

To achieve this 2 options were considered:-

- 1) Carry out minor alignment work to offside roundabout and slip road kerb lines.
- 2) Adjust the nearside kerb line to the slip road, which involved considerable expense in relocating existing utilities in addition to the cost of the highway works.

The land and finance are not available, nor are there plans, to provide a dedicated slip onto the A127 for Rayleigh/Wickford traffic, mirroring the work carried out in 2009.

Therefore option 1) was chosen over option 2) as this provided the required improvements to traffic flow and congestion.

Question

Response

of this and is in fact longer than the other similar slip road diagonally opposite, which approaches the A127 westbound.

I can see no justification for moving any utility apparatus; no utilities, other than sign posts, are apparent. The newly widened section seems totally adequate to incorporate the proposal, as submitted, in full.

I hope that Councillors will support me when I say that, as things stand, a vast sum of money has been totally wasted on this project. Money that could have been better spent on providing the traffic light system at the entrance to Downhall Park Way.

I believe a full investigation on why this has turned out to be a white elephant should be made. Those responsible should be made to justify why they did not recognise the problem before commencing the work.

Mr A Blake, Rayleigh

Why is Swayne Park allotment site and the causeway leading to the site being constantly flooded, especially following the construction of the 5 football pitches in Priory Chase?

The area around the allotments at Swayne Park is in a natural hollow into which excess surface water has historically drained at times when the ground is water logged and unable to absorb more rain water. The fact that there is a causeway leading to the allotments again indicates the historical issues with the area.

The general area used to be Reads Nursery, who took advantage of the wet ground conditions to store trees. Rochford District Council is presently installing land drains to improve the drainage from

Question

Response

their car park in the area; these drains may improve the general drainage in the area.

The installation of the football pitches will have had no negative impact on the drainage or flooding in the area generally. The area was originally green open space and is effectively the same, although now there are land drains installed leading the water from the pitches into the adjoining ditch; the amount of run off water should in fact be reduced..

The associated car park has been left un-surfaced to facilitate natural drainage of surface water by permeation.

Mrs J Rowlinson, Rayleigh

For some considerable time a large white van has parked daily at various times during the day and always in the evening directly opposite Dawlish Crescent in Exmouth Drive. It contravenes two sections of the Highway Code:

“242 – you must not leave your vehicle or trailer in a dangerous position or where it causes any unnecessary obstruction of the road.

This is a visible obstruction when exiting Teignmouth Drive into Exmouth Drive en route to Rawreth Lane and vice versa including egress into Dawlish Crescent.

“243 – do not stop or park opposite or within 10 metres (32 feet) of a junction except in an authorised parking space”.

The problem at the moment is further exacerbated with the presence of barriers on the road at the corner of Dawlish

This type of question is raised on a fairly frequent basis and in most towns.

These days with more and more vehicles on the road and less infrastructure to deal with demand, parking and obstruction complaints are bound to follow and do. For some reason most people also expect to park immediately outside their own home at the inconvenience to others.

Thank you for including the relevant Highway Code sections. The Highway Code is actually guidelines and it does not always follow that there is an equivalent piece of legislation. The Highway Code is ignored by many motorists as soon as they pass their driving test.

I accept you may raise 'Unnecessary Obstruction' which is a fixed penalty offence. Any vehicle parked on the road is an obstruction and we (the police) couldn't and wouldn't give a ticket to everyone. Each case would be judged on its own merits.

When the Police receive a complaint, they often liaise with partner agencies e.g. Essex County Council Highways as to any similar complaints they may have received and also whether there is any plans for double yellow lines or other parking restrictions.

We have also checked Road Collision data

Question

and Exmouth, as contractors are 'hole filling' and repairing pavements. The road is narrowed and the van continues to be parked opposite the junction.

I have in the past complained to the local police who in turn passed me on to the Childrens officer – Down Hall School rear entrance is off Teignmouth Drive. Unfortunately neither have been able to help. Can some steps be taken to alleviate this problem not only for myself but for all the frustrated motorists who live in this area?

Response

relevant to that section from our incident computer. There has been no reported collisions at the junction in the 2 years I checked.

Police officers have visited the junction you have highlighted and have seen the van as described. They did perceive that it caused much of an obstruction. Playing 'devils advocate' the van actually acts to slow vehicles down and motorists take more care because of it being there.

We do not feel it warranted a fixed penalty ticket, however we will write to the company that owns it and appeal to them that it be parked elsewhere. We will also pass on the details to the Rayleigh Neighbourhood Police Constable, Wyn Sharp, for him to monitor the location and to raise at the next Neighbourhood Action Panel meeting held monthly.

For reference; the Children's Officer is actually Hilary Wood who works for Essex County Council - Road Safety.

If you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact Wyn Sharp on 0300 333 4444 ext 490126.

Ms G Gutteridge, Rayleigh

Can you please tell me exactly what is being done to enforce the 3 tonne weight restriction in Watery Lane/Beeches Road? In his letter of 12 August, Councillor Hume, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation, stated that the restriction would be enforced and there would be no 'exemptions' for The Mousery. However, very large lorries are still ignoring the restriction. The reason for this restriction is the 'weak bridge'. Who is going to be held responsible if this 'weak bridge' (which I understand channels excess water to the Crouch) was to collapse

Here is a breakdown of what County Highways has been doing at Watery Lane:-

| AreaName | Date | TimeStart | Duration | Breaches |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Watery Lane, Rochford | 09/09/2010 | 08:50 | 220 | 25 |
| Watery Lane, Rochford | 14/09/2010 | 16:00 | 120 | 17 |
| Watery Lane, Rochford | 22/09/2010 | 13:00 | 60 | 13 |
| Watery Lane, Rochford | 29/09/2010 | 14:55 | 60 | 20 |
| Watery Lane, Rochford | 11/10/2010 | 15:30 | 60 | 16 |
| Watery Lane, Rochford | 20/10/2010 | 13:20 | 60 | 13 |
| Watery Lane, Rochford | 10/11/2010 | 09:45 | 60 | 10 |
| Watery Lane, Rochford | 15/11/2010 | 09:15 | 60 | 8 |
| Watery Lane, Rochford | 18/11/2010 | 11:25 | 60 | 12 |
| Watery Lane, Rochford | 25/11/2010 | 14:10 | 60 | 20 |
| Watery Lane, Rochford | 26/11/2010 | 10:50 | 60 | 19 |

ECC has worked with Essex Police on a number of occasions when 18 fixed penalties have been issued.

As you can see we have been trying to spend an

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Question

because of this increase in heavy traffic going over it since RDC gave the go ahead for change of use of The Mousery?

Mrs B Dawson, Rayleigh

Last year I put in a request for a seat on John Fisher field. Having received a phone call the following day, I have not heard anything since.

Is there any truth in the rumour that Tesco is taking over the Eon site?

Response

hour a week on site. We have upped this recently to 3 sessions every couple of weeks, however we have many other roads to cover and have to ensure we target our resources fairly across the county.

This will be looked into and the resident will be notified direct.

There is no information available on this.