

## **East Area Committee – 27 February 2008**

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Minutes of the meeting of the **East Area Committee** held on **27 February 2008**  
when there were present:-

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

Cllr Mrs T J Capon	Cllr K J Gordon
Cllr J P Cottis	Cllr Mrs S A Harper
Cllr T G Cutmore	Cllr Mrs B J Wilkins

### **ALSO PRESENT**

Cllr P A Capon	-	Stambridge Parish Council
Cllr Mrs M S Vince	-	Rochford Parish Council
Cllr Mrs P Shaw	-	Ashingdon Parish Council
Cllr D Whittingham	-	Paglesham Parish Council
S A Thallon	-	Essex County Council
A Parkman	-	Essex Police

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

J Bourne	-	Head of Community Services
M Power	-	Committee Administrator
T Hine	-	Representing Virgin Active

## **72 AREA COMMITTEE – INITIAL BUSINESS**

### **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor V Newby (Canewdon Parish Council).

### **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2008 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to it being noted that:-

Stambridge as well as Great Wakering should be included in item 4/08 of the East Area Update in respect of the reassessment of provision by Essex County Council of buses earlier in the morning and later at night.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr J P Cottis declared a personal interest in item 4(1), Virgin Active Leisure Contract Progress, by virtue of being a user of the facilities. Cllr Mrs M S Vince declared a personal interest in item 4(1), as Chairman of the Star Partnership, which was referred to in Appendix A of the report.

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

### **73 COMMUNITY FORUM**

Two requests for information had been received in advance of the meeting and a document summarising these, together with further questions received, is appended.

Discussion ensued in relation to speed limits within Rochford town centre and the following points were raised:-

- It was questioned why previous discussions by Rochford District Council in this respect had not resulted in the introduction of a 20mph speed limit in Rochford town centre.
- It was queried why there had been no change to the street lighting in Hall Road, Rochford following the recently imposed 40mph speed limit.
- Essex County Highways should be asked to explain the basis on which the speed checks along West Street and South Street, Rochford (as reported in item 08/07 in the East Area update) had been carried out.

The issue of traffic flow and illegal parking in North Street would be raised with the District Council's Head of Planning and Transportation.

Following discussion relating to flood warnings and related issues, the Chairman reiterated that the Environment Agency should be contacted in this regard. The District Council had answered questions relating to flooding to the fullest extent it was able; further queries should accordingly be raised with the Environment Agency.

### **74 SPOTLIGHT ISSUES**

#### **(1) Virgin Active Leisure Contract Progress**

Members considered the report of the Head of Community Services providing an update on the progress and development of the leisure management contract. The Chairman welcomed Mr T Hine, Contracts Manager of Virgin Active, to the meeting.

In response to questions, the following was noted:-

- The flood lighting used to illuminate the hard court surface at Great Wakering Sports Centre was recognised as an urgent issue and would be completed this year.

- The issue relating to the difficulty in getting through on the telephone at Clements Hall would be investigated.
- The problems relating to air-conditioning at the Freight House function rooms were being monitored, although it was recognised that any work undertaken in this respect would be classed as a Virgin Group capital expenditure item.
- The District Council's Property Maintenance and Highways Manager was dealing with the issue of lighting in the Great Waking Sports Centre car park. A date for completion of the works would be provided.

Members wished to express their thanks to Mr Hine for his attendance at the meeting. It was emphasised that the Council valued its relationship with Virgin Active, and, in particular, its work with the youth of the District.

### **Resolved**

That the contents of the report be noted.

### **(2) Update on Crime and Disorder in the East Area**

Figures relating to reported crimes and anti-social behaviour (ASB) figures for the East of the District had been previously circulated to Members.

Acting Chief Inspector Andy Parkman advised that the figures for January 2008 showed that there had been 60 reports of ASB incidents in the East area of the District, compared to 98 in the previous year. In the Rochford District as a whole, the actual number of reported ASB incidents to date was 2202, which compared favourably with the target set for the District of 2967 ASB incidents, a reduction of 25.8%.

In January 2008 there had been 52 reported crimes, compared to 73 in January 2007. The figure for the Rochford District to the end of December 2007 was 2774 reported crimes, compared with a target for the year of 3139. The Government's three-year crime reduction target for the District of 13.5% was likely to be exceeded, as the District was currently 3% under target for the year to date, and had achieved a 10.2% reduction in the previous year.

Andy Parkman detailed the priorities identified through the Neighbourhood Action Panels (NAP's), as follows:-

### **Ashingdon and Canewdon NAP**

- Nuisance around Canewdon Church
- Youth nuisance at Ashingdon Memorial Hall
- Speeding vehicles in Canewdon village and Ashingdon Road

### **Rochford NAP**

- Youth nuisance at St Mark's Field, St Clare Meadow, Stillwells and Doggetts
- Youth nuisance and other issues at Roche Close/Somerfield development

### **Great Wakering NAP**

- Disorder in the High Street around public houses at closing time
- Speeding vehicles in High Street, Shoebury Road, New Road and Little Wakering Road
- Mini-motos and go-karts using the common and public roads

Responding to questions, Andy Parkman advised:-

- That the biggest factor in reducing crime was the introduction of neighbourhood policing. In addition, the Police received the support of the Rochford Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP), which targeted community issues and was able to source multi-agency response and assistance. The Rochford CDRP had the best performance figures in terms of crime reduction in Essex and the Home Office was looking at it as an example of good practice.
- That the matter of non-attendance by a Police Constable at Great Wakering Parish Council meetings would be raised and an answer provided.
- That various measures were in place to deal with the problem of graffiti at Great Wakering Sports Centre, the church and along the High Street.
- That the errors identified in the reported crime and ASB figures for the East of the District would be rectified for future meetings. It was confirmed that the monthly totals shown on the current figures were correct.
- Concern was voiced that the Secure by Design code in respect of crime and disorder provisions in new building developments was voluntary. It was felt that it would be beneficial if this were mandatory. It was advised that an assessment of the Roche Close, Rochford development carried out by the fire service had identified several fire-related risks. The majority of these had since been rectified, which had resulted in a marked improvement in safety in Roche Close.

Members wished to record their thanks to the Police for all their hard work in reducing crime and disorder in the District.

**75 EAST AREA UPDATE**

The Committee received the East Area update.

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

A definite time would be established for clearing the obstruction.

**New Somerfield development in Rochford (22/07)**

Progress relating to the adoption of the access road to the Somerfield development would be investigated.

**Street lighting in Sutton Road (26/07)**

It was noted that the issue of upgrading street lighting in Sutton Road, particularly from Warwick Drive to Purdeys Way, had been ongoing for many years. The possibility of a scheme being progressed whereby the County Highways allocated a sum of money to each District Council to effect repairs was discussed.

**Surfacing of the carriageway at the Brays Lane junction (28/07)**

Members offered thanks to County Highways for the resurfacing of the carriageway at the Brays Lane junction. It was, however, requested that the weight restriction sign, removed from the junction of Apton Hall Lane with Stambridge Road, be replaced as a matter of urgency and the hedgerow be cut back.

**Rochford Sewage Treatment Works, Stambridge (33/07)**

It was requested that instances of activity and smells emanating from the Rochford Sewage Treatment Works, Stambridge, be investigated.

**Replacement of the plastic banding on the bollards outside the White Hart in Great Wakering High Street (37/07)**

It was requested that a timescale be established for the replacement of the plastic banding.

**Parking in Old Ship Lane, Rochford (1/08)**

It was requested that action be taken regarding a van regularly parked over the access to the parking bays in Old Ship Lane, Rochford.

**Bus provision in Stambridge (4/08)**

The County Council is to reassess provision of a bus service from Stambridge earlier in the mornings and later at night.

**Public Footpaths 1 and 3, Stambridge – proposed footpath diversions (Minute no 23)**

An update will be provided on the progress of the public consultation in respect of the diversion of Footpath 3 and part extinguishment of Footpath 1.

The meeting closed at 9.00 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

As the average speed of traffic is around 30mph in Rochford, it means some drivers are exceeding this limit. It is not safe to travel even at 30mph; so why does the Council find this acceptable and why aren't they considering doing something about it?

**Response**

Although it is difficult to determine the average speed of traffic in Rochford, this can be done for a particular road if speed data is recorded. The current speed restriction for the residential area of Rochford is 30mph, either by virtue of the many systems of street lights or, in certain cases, by traffic regulation orders. The current Speed Management Strategy and Policy for Essex does give guidelines for considering 20mph restrictions on certain roads, but the County Council's Cabinet Member with responsibility for Highways and Transportation must approve all requests. The Traffic Engineer had not received any requests for Rochford.

In partnership with Essex Police, the County Council has installed a number of fixed safety cameras in recent years. In addition to these, there are a large number of mobile camera sites that are regularly enforced, and a programme for our variable speed signs, which are rotated from site to site on a regular basis.

Essex Police are now holding regular community speed watches, and any residents who wish to get involved can do so and will be trained accordingly.

Unfortunately there will always be a small number of drivers who will continue to exceed the signed speed restriction.

### Question

D Saunders, Rochford

You did not answer my question regarding parking in North Street by traders and Council workers. Therefore, how many PCN's of the 722 issued were to traders and council workers? If none, why not?

### Response

It is not possible to identify/distinguish between traders and council workers, as this information is not held in the Council's computer system. However, the Council's Parking Attendants do not differentiate between Council employees, traders and others – if there is an infringement of the parking restrictions a PCN will be issued.

C Pohl, Hockley

A response would be provided at the next meeting.

Is it possible to restore:-

- (1) timetable frames on the Harrogate Drive (Service 7) bus stops –
  - (a) Southend direction (removed by vandals)
  - (b) Rayleigh direction (removed by motor-cycle collision 15 years ago).
- (2) Service 10 timetables in frames at Ashingdon School's bus stops, both Rayleigh and Rochford/Canewdon directions.
- (3) Install a litter bin by the Rayleigh direction bus stop at Harrogate Drive.

G K Creak, Great Waking

A response would be provided at the next meeting.

Requests the District Council to ascertain who is responsible for maintenance and cleaning of the public footpath that runs from Conway Avenue alongside the Anchor Pub into Waking High Street.