

East Area Committee – 12 January 2011

Minutes of the meeting of the **East Area Committee** held on **12 January 2011** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr Mrs G A Lucas-Gill

Vice-Chairman: Cllr J P Cottis

Cllr Mrs T J Capon
Cllr T G Cutmore
Cllr T E Goodwin
Cllr K J Gordon

Cllr C G Seagers
Cllr M J Steptoe
Cllr Mrs B J Wilkins

ALSO PRESENT

Cllr R A Pearson	-	Essex County Council
Cllr N Wallace	-	Canewdon Parish Council
Cllr Mrs K Perring	-	Great Wakering Parish Council
Cllr J Bond	-	Rochford Parish Council
Cllr P A Capon	-	Stambridge Parish Council
P.C. S Goldsack	-	Essex Police

OFFICERS PRESENT

J Bourne	-	Head of Community Services
S Worthington	-	Committee Administrator

6 AREA COMMITTEE – INITIAL BUSINESS

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs P Shaw (Ashingdon Parish Council), Cllr D Whittingham (Paglesham Parish Council) and Mr B Summerfield (Barling Magna Parish Council and Sutton Parish Council).

Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2010 were approved as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

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

7 COMMUNITY FORUM

Questions raised during the Community Forum and the responses given are summarised in the appendix to the Minutes.

A resident of Havengore Close was advised, in response to a question relating to the non receipt of any notification about heavy rainfall on 25 October 2010 despite having subscribed to the flood warning system, that this system was aimed specifically at flooding caused by the sea, or fluvial / river

flooding, rather than heavy rainfall. Flooding of the road in Havengore Close was likely to be the responsibility of the relevant Water Board or the landowner. Further information will be provided for the next meeting as to where responsibility lay for road surface flooding in Havengore Close.

Following on from the two flooding-related questions submitted by Mr Efde, Cllr C G Seagers advised that he had submitted Freedom of Information Act requests to the Environment Agency and Defence Estates relating to sea defences facing the Havengore estuary. It appeared that a number of issues raised in 2004 relating to sea defences had not been adequately addressed. He would continue with such enquiries.

In response to a resident enquiry about refuse collection over the Christmas period, the Portfolio Holder for the Environment confirmed that the green garden and kitchen waste bin was always collected weekly. During the recent severe weather, however, there had been instances of green waste being frozen to the bottom of the green bins. The other bins, for dry recyclables and non recyclables, were collected fortnightly on an alternate basis. There was no need to alter this arrangement as it was working well.

At this point the Committee reconvened into formal session.

8 SPOTLIGHT ISSUES

The Committee welcomed P.C. Stuart Goldsack to the meeting to provide an update on crime and disorder in the East Area of the District.

P.C. Goldsack advised that there had been a reduction in crime within the District, including burglaries, vehicle crime and robberies, compared to this time last year.

At the same time last year Essex Police was 5% above its anti-social behaviour target; this had now been reduced to 1% above target. This was almost certainly attributable to the introduction of a Dispersal Order, which came into effect on 1 December 2010 in the centre of Rochford. The Order covers an area that includes Weir Pond Road, East Street, Back Lane, Union Lane, Roche Close and North Street and gives Police Officers and Police Community Support Officers powers to disperse groups of two or more at any time. To remain or return to this area for up to a 24-hour period after having been told to leave or disperse is an offence, which could lead to arrest. Once asked to disperse, young people have to do so within 30 minutes. Anyone who has been moved on by a dispersal order twice will receive a Police letter and after that a visit to their home. To date, approximately 28 young people had been dispersed and 3 children taken home, as a result of their age.

There had been problems reported to the Police relating to nine young people in Great Wakering. P.C. Thomas had subsequently visited them all at home and they had received a letter from the Police Chief Inspector, which appears to have resolved the problem.

On New Year's Eve there was only reported incidence of anti-social behaviour complaint made in the District and none at Halloween.

In response to questions the following was noted:-

- Police surgeries are generally held once a month. The one held in Rochford Library is successful and well attended by residents and provides advice on crime to residents.
- The Neighbourhood Policing team will remain in Rochford. The Response Unit will be moved to Rayleigh, along with officers from other areas and therefore there will be an increase in the number of officers potentially available to the District.
- The Police response time from Rayleigh to Great Wakering should be about the same as for Rochford to Great Wakering.
- There had been no reduction in the number of Response Unit vehicles. County Councillor R A Pearson would be provided with the exact number of vehicles outside the meeting.
- Occasional instances of petrol being put into Police vehicles rather than diesel was a case of human error.

One Member observed that cars were being developed that made it impossible to put the wrong fuel in; as cars were replaced over time this problem would disappear.

9 EAST AREA UPDATE

The Committee received the East Area Update.

H1/10 – Vehicles Travelling the Wrong Way Up West Street, Rochford (Minute 153/10 and 296/10)

It was noted that vehicles continued to travel the wrong way up West Street, Rochford. This issue will be raised again with County Highways.

Road at the Side of the Co-op Supermarket, Great Wakering

It was noted that work had commenced on the unmade road at the side of the Co-op supermarket in Great Wakering. Repairs had started and were nearly completed on the road surface. A final coating was all that was left to complete the works. The Co-op had also been asked by one of the Ward Councillors to install a light in the road.

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The meeting closed at 8.15 pm.

Chairman

Date

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

Appendix

Question

Response

Mr Broomhall, Rochford

There has been a lot of talk recently about the airport at Rochford and what it will mean for the area, and I agree it could bring a little prosperity to local people. But if we are going to invite people to visit Rochford had we best not tidy the place up? The main road into Rochford from Warners Bridge is a disgrace, with grass verges churned up by vehicles and some even using this area to have cars for sale! This is not the best advert for a local community that should pride itself on its outlook for the future.

Essex County Council's Senior Inspector has inspected the road in question and has concluded that, with regard to vegetation, there are no areas that appear to require immediate attention. The issue of cars parking on verges is apparent, but as the road is very long, ECC will need specific locations to enable the Inspectors to be directed to the pertinent areas. The resident has been contacted direct with a request that he identifies exact locations; the County Highways Inspectors can then be requested to look at the site.

B Efde, Great Wakering

Question 1

What proposal do the Councillors have for the protection of or compensation for people whose lives and property will be at risk because of the problems outlined by the Water Minister, Richard Benyon, in an article in the *Independent on Sunday*? This article stated that "millions of homeowners living near the sea or rivers face being hit with a new 'flood tax' under controversial coalition plans to plug a £260m shortfall in spending on flood defences". The article advises that "Mr Benyon believes the cost of protecting homes and businesses from the elements should be 'shared' between the Government and those who benefit from defences directly".

The full *Independent on Sunday* article can be found at: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politicsminister-plans-to-hit-homes-with-flood-tax-2133555.html>

DEFRA's response to the article was as follows and can be found at the following link: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2010/11/15/mythbusters-101115/>

"There are no plans to introduce a 'flood tax' for people whose homes and businesses are at risk of flooding. However, it's important that the people who benefit most from flood defences are more involved in their development to ensure that they provide the necessary protection in the most cost efficient way.

All flood defences already under construction will be completed, and all funding proposals for future schemes will continue to be considered as part of normal business. None have been scrapped. The allocation of annual budgets has yet to be finalised so it is not possible to

Question

Question 2

In view of the warning given to the Council by the Environment Agency in 2006, what proposals, if any, do the Councillors have for the protection or compensation for people whose lives and property will be at risk because of these problems?

J Bowker, Rochford

Watts Lane, which extends along the perimeter of Purdeys Industrial Estate and forms part of the Roach Valley Way, has become an extremely unattractive route due to the ugly metal fencing which runs alongside part of the pathway and a high volume of rubbish which appears to be blown from the industrial estate onto the pathway.

Question 1

I have previously been advised by Essex County Councillor, Tracey Chapman, that the outer fencing will be removed. This hasn't happened yet. Can you advise if and when it will be?

Question 2

Can anything be done about the amount of rubbish that collects in this area? I have previously participated in a rubbish collection exercise but within days the issue returns as some of the units on Purdeys Industrial Estate appear to be a substantial source of the problem. Can the Council put any pressure on the estate to be a 'good neighbour' and take action, such as introducing better barriers

Response

discuss individual projects at this time".

There is a consultation document that seeks to invite views on potential reforms to the way in which capital grant-in-aid is allocated to projects in England in order to manage the risk of flooding and coastal erosion, which can be found at:-

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/flood-coastal-erosion/index.htm>

It has been established that the land is privately owned. Therefore the identity of the landowner would need to be established so that they could be approached for an answer. This would incur a search fee from the land registry.

A District Council Street Scene officer will attend the area concerned in order to ascertain whether any action can be taken. If the fly tip is on public land it will be removed, as necessary.

Question

or walls to stop rubbish escaping onto this valuable route, or simply ensuring that they take proper care to avoid the escape of rubbish in the first place?

Response