

Environmental Services Committee – 2 December 2004

Minutes of the meeting of the **Environmental Services Committee** held on **2 December 2004** when there were present:-

Cllr Mrs T J Capon (Acting Chairman)

Cllr R A Amner
Cllr T G Cutmore
Cllr Mrs L Hungate
Cllr C J Lumley
Cllr P R Robinson

Cllr C G Seagers
Cllr Mrs M S Vince
Cllr Mrs M J Webster
Cllr P F A Webster

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs R G S Choppen, J E Grey and J M Pullen.

OFFICERS PRESENT

S Clarkson - Head of Revenue & Housing Management
S Scrutton - Head of Planning Services
S Worthington - Committee Administrator

512 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2004 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

513 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Mrs M J Webster declared a personal interest in item 11 of the agenda by virtue of being the County Council's Community Care representative.

514 PROGRESS ON DECISIONS

The Committee received the Schedule relating to Progress on Decisions and in response to Member questions the following was noted:-

Air Quality Review and Assessment

It was confirmed that the Section 106 Agreement for the London Southend Airport planning application included provision for the monitoring of air quality.

Formation of a Groundwork Trust for the Thames Gateway South Essex Area

The partners' meeting took place on 18 November. Progress was slow, and it was anticipated that any Trust would come into operation in April 2006, if agreed.

Car Parks Customer Survey – Results

A report would come to Committee in the January/February cycle of meetings with a view to any increases in car parking charges being implemented around April 2005.

515 DEREGULATION OF TAXI FARES

This item had been referred to the Taxi Licensing Sub-Committee to examine in detail.

516 PARKING FOR CARE WORKERS

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue & Housing Management exploring whether or not to issue parking permits to carers working in the District, following the Council taking over the enforcement of Traffic Regulation Orders from the Police on 1 October 2004.

Members were disappointed that other Local Authorities issued permits to carers to allow them to park in residents' parking schemes only.

Responding to a Member enquiry relating to applying the same conditions to carers with respect to parking as for doctors, nurses and midwives when attending emergency calls, officers advised that all of the known care agencies operating in the District had been canvassed. The agencies had been asked whether there was a need for care worker parking. None of the care agencies, however, had responded.

During debate there was a general consensus that voluntary carers provided a valuable service to the community, but would not have been canvassed for their views on controlled car parking.

Responding to a question relating to the costs of residents' car parking schemes, officers confirmed that residents' schemes should be self financing with the support of more than 50% of residents in a road whose properties had frontage on the road to which a residents' parking scheme applied (and with no access to off-street parking or to a garage). The cost of an annual season ticket for a residents' parking scheme (based on charges levied by other Essex Authorities) was likely to be in the region of £35-40 per annum, with day tickets purchasable at around £1.20 each.

In conclusion, officers advised that residents' parking schemes would generally only apply to areas with single yellow lines, not those with double yellow lines. Those vehicles displaying a BMA badge, however, would be able to park on double yellow lines for emergency calls.

Resolved

- (1) That the British Medical Association (BMA) Badge be accepted for use within the Rochford District and that the conditions of use, as set out in the report, be applied.
- (2) That if a residents' parking scheme were introduced in the future, consideration be given to providing carers with permits to park in these permitted parking areas, if requests are received. (HRHM)

517 PPS9 – BIODIVERSITY & GEOLOGICAL CONSERVATION DRAFT CIRCULAR – BIODIVERSITY & GEOLOGICAL CONSERVATION – STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS AND THEIR IMPACT WITHIN THE PLANNING SYSTEM

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning Services seeking Members' views on draft Planning Policy Statement 9 on Biodiversity and Geological Conservation and a related draft Circular.

Resolved

That the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister be advised that Rochford District Council considers that the draft PPS and supporting Circular provides clear advice on biodiversity and geological conservation. (HPS)

518 THAMES GATEWAY FUNDING – WEBSTERS WAY ENHANCEMENT

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning Services updating Members on proposals for enhancement of the Websters Way area of Rayleigh Town Centre, following the announcement of project funding by the Deputy Prime Minister on 9 November 2004.

It was noted that there was a tight timescale for this project as the Council had to demonstrate to the ODPM that the funding could be spent; it was anticipated that, subject to final approval from ODPM, work would commence in February 2005.

Members noted that, as a result of concerns relating to security, the scheme would not include a covered walkway to the pedestrian link, but that an attempt would be made, within the available funding, to incorporate CCTV.

Members were pleased to see that enhanced street lighting would be included within the scheme.

Responding to a Member enquiry relating to any prescribed timescale for completion of the scheme, officers advised that it was hoped that there would be some flexibility from ODPM, in similar vein to that extended to the Rayleigh windmill project, as it was likely that work could not be completed until around June.

In response to an enquiry about Contract 2000, officers confirmed that a consultant would be managing the whole scheme and that there would be a full tender process for the works.

Responding to an enquiry relating to cycle parking within Websters Way car park, officers advised that the present cycle parking site would not be changed, but would be considerably enhanced and a cover provided.

Officers advised that there might be an opportunity to move the recycling banks to another part of the car park, so that there was more separation from the general car parking. However, it would probably not be possible to introduce a temporary stop-off point for recycling, as this would inevitably lead to a loss of car parking spaces and it would be preferable to try and introduce more car parking spaces as part of the scheme rather than reducing them. Officers further advised that although the funding and timescale would not allow for solutions to improve the flow of traffic in and out of the car park, there might be an opportunity to examine the roundabout in some detail.

It was noted that, with respect to bus telemetry, there would be more merit in introducing this in the High Street than in Websters Way, as the bus stop in Websters Way was not heavily used. It was, however, clear that in time telemetry would be more generally widespread.

Concluding the debate, officers confirmed that the scheme included provision for a town map.

Resolved

That, subject to the deletion of the covered walkway to the pedestrian link and the inclusion of provision for CCTV, the principles for the Websters Way enhancement scheme, as outlined in the report, be agreed. (HPS)

519 LOCAL TRANSPORT – SOUTH ESSEX AREA REVIEW

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning Services outlining the findings of a review carried out by Essex County Highways to identify ways to improve the co-ordination of home to school, social care and local bus transport.

Resolved

That this report forms the basis of the Council's response to this consultation paper. (HPS)

The meeting closed at 8.21 pm.

Chairman

Date