

Environmental Services Committee - 5 September 2002

Minutes of the meeting of the **Environmental Services Committee** held on **5 September 2002** when there were present:

Cllr Mrs L Hungate – Chairman
Cllr J R Grey – Vice Chairman

Cllr Mrs T J Capon
Cllr R G S Choppen
Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn
Cllr T E Goodwin
Cllr A J Humphries

Cllr G A Mockford
Cllr C R Morgan
Cllr C G Seagers
Cllr M G B Starke
Cllrs Mrs M J Webster

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr R A Oatham.

SUBSTITUTES

Cllr C J Lumley

VISITING

Cllrs T G Cutmore, Mrs M S Vince and P F A Webster.

DISTRICT OFFICERS PRESENT

G Woolhouse	Head of Housing, Health & Community Care
S Clarkson	Head of Revenue & Housing Management
J Bourne	Leisure and Contracts Manager
J Bostock	Principal Committee Administrator

COUNTY OFFICERS PRESENT

N McCullagh	Area Manager, County Highways
L Harvey	District Engineer
P Craig	Traffic Management Officer
T Stubbington	Chief Constable, Representative on Traffic Matters

395 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 July 2002 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

396 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn declared a prejudicial interest in the item on Magnolia Road, Hawkwell – Proposed Prohibition of Driving, by virtue of being an objector, and left the meeting during consideration thereof.

Cllr C J Lumley declared a personal interest in the item on Proposal for Provision of a Pedestrian Crossing – Love Lane, Rayleigh by virtue of being a Governor of Rayleigh Primary School

Cllr T E Goodwin declared a prejudicial interest in the item on Taxi Licensing Review by virtue of being a taxi driver, and left the meeting during consideration thereof.

397 MOTION ON NOTICE

The Proper Officer reported on a motion received pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 12 from Councillors Mrs H L A Glynn, Mrs M J Webster and P F A webster relating to inclusion of the Freight House Car Park in the Off Street Parking Places Order. The objective of the motion was to reduce parking abuse by commuters and enable parking for all users, staff and casual visitors to the Freight House and Rochford Reservoir.

In presenting the motion, Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn highlighted parking difficulties experienced at recent Member 'Teach-Ins' which were symptomatic of the type of problems experienced by other users. Informal consultation with other users had further confirmed the need to address this matter.

Responding to Member questions, the Head of Revenue and Housing Management advised that, if effectively controlled, there should be adequate parking at the Freight House. An amendment to the Off Street Parking Places Order applied to weekdays only would be the most appropriate.

On a motion moved by Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn and seconded by Mrs M J Webster it was:-

Resolved

That the Freight House Car Park, Rochford be brought under the control of the District of Rochford Off Street Parking Places Order with a view to making it available to Permit Holders only before 9.00am on weekdays. Permits to only be issued to those who have bona fide business at the Freight House. (HRHM)

398 ISSUES ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

- (a) Proposal for future locally determined schemes:
Introduction of a 3 or 5 year programme**

Resolved

That a three year programme be adopted for future locally determined schemes. (County Highways)

- (b) Proposal for provision of a pedestrian crossing - Love Lane, Rayleigh**

Resolved

- (1) That no pedestrian crossing be provided in Love Lane, Rayleigh.
- (2) That a letter be sent to the police highlighting the Committee's concerns about parking on the pavements outside the school in Love Lane, Rayleigh. (CD(F&ES))

- (c) Review of Refuse collection policies relating to bag collections and larger households**

Resolved

- (1) That residents be granted the right to have two wheelie bins of either 120 litres or 240 litres, providing that they pay the purchase and collection costs.
- (2) That the residents choosing to purchase an additional bin should not be bound by collection charges over a ten-year period. (CD(F&ES))

- (d) Litter Bin Condition Survey**

Resolved

- (1) That the litter bins be replaced on the basis detailed in Section 3 of the report.
- (2) That the installation of bins should be put out to tender again within six months. (CD(F&ES))

(e) Kerbside recycling scheme update/recycling issues

Resolved

- (1) That a further report come back to this Committee with proposals for addressing the complaints from residents outlined in paragraph 3.6 of the report.
- (2) That the Committee be provided with information about the financial benefits gained from recycling.
- (3) That the progress made in the Council's level of recycling following last year's expansion of the kerbside scheme be noted. (CD(F&ES))

399 ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT FOR BRADWELL NUCLEAR POWER STATION

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Housing Health & Community Care on the submission of a Council response to proposals for decommissioning Bradwell Nuclear Power Station.

Members welcomed Mr P Wright, Station Manager of Bradwell Power Station, and Jim Craig, Commissioning Manager for Magnox Electric, who were in attendance to give a presentation on the proposals.

During the presentation, reference was made to the historical background associated with the development of the Bradwell site, decommissioning activity being undertaken by Magnox Electric in other parts of the country/world and the nature of the waste at Bradwell. One aspect was that intermediate waste would need to be stored on the Bradwell site until a repository is available.

Key messages on decommissioning which Mr Craig and Mr Wright wished to emphasise were that:-

- Decommissioning strategy is developed on the basis that safety and environmental considerations are paramount.
- This type of decommissioning had been undertaken before Bradwell was not an experiment.
- The only waste remaining in-situ would be that which had emanated from Bradwell as a working station.
- All decommissioning activity is heavily regulated.
- The power station would continue to employ a significant number of people and contribute to the local economy.

Responding to Member questions, Mr Wright and Mr Craig advised that:-

- The Office of Civil Nuclear Security is responsible for oversight of site security. Security is maintained at existing levels whilst fuel is being removed.
- Magnox was currently consulting the regulators on future storage arrangements. Waste stores are designed to take account of aircraft crashes and have to be agreed with the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate. Future arrangements for the reactor building are currently under review as part of the decommissioning process.
- Radioactivity continues to diminish over time, and will have greatly reduced by the time Bradwell is finally dismantled.
- Many reactors throughout the world have been dismantled. The Bradwell type is almost unique to the United Kingdom – the nearest similar being the Windscale Advanced Gas Reactor, the decommissioning of which will be completed within the next 22 months.
- There have never been any nuclear incidents as a result of dismantling.
- The Bradwell railway line would be used for transporting high level waste. Options for other types of waste were under consideration. However, it was likely that the road would be a preferred option due to batch sizes. One contentious aspect was the large quantities of ballast, which would need to be brought to the site.
- Wherever possible, scrap is recycled.
- The intention is that the site will be finally cleared in about 100 years time. Internationally, the nuclear industry is the only industry which costs for returning sites to green-field use.
- No decisions have yet been made on future site usage. Magnox was in consultation with Maldon District Council on this aspect.

On a motion moved by Councillor Mrs L Hungate and seconded by Councillor M G B Starke it was:-

Resolved

That this Council's preferred option be deferred site clearance (deferred dismantling). (HHHCC)

400 MAGNOLIA ROAD, HAWKWELL - PROPOSED PROHIBITION OF DRIVING

The Committee considered the report of the Area Manager, County Highways, on a request by several residents and recreational users of Magnolia Road to restrict traffic movement along the public right of way.

In presenting this item, the Area Manager observed that the factors associated with decision making on Magnolia Road were typical of the finely balanced dilemmas often faced when determining Highway matters. There had been 15 letters of objection to lockable gates, and 14 letters of support.

Mr Stubbington advised that the Chief Constable could not support closure orders on the basis of environmental considerations alone. Whilst the Fire Service had the equipment to pass rapidly through lockable gates, other services may have more difficulty – it not necessarily being the case that vehicles carry emergency keys. There was not enough evidence for the Chief Constable to agree to closure on safety grounds. For example, there are near misses across most County roads on most days.

Responding to Member questions, Officers advised that Railtrack had no problems with the railway line bridge to the White Hart Lane end of Magnolia Road. The Area Manager confirmed that he would research the background to the removal of a step at the bridge.

The Committee recognised that more detailed investigation of this matter would be appropriate and that it could be suitably referred to Overview and Scrutiny. Responding to Member questions, the Chairman indicated that the possibility of introducing chicanes instead of a lockable gate could be included in Overview and Scrutiny considerations.

On a motion moved by Cllr M G B Starke and seconded by Cllr T G Goodwin it was:-

Resolved

That this matter be referred to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee for detailed consideration. (County Highways)

401 TAXI LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Committee considered the Minutes of the meetings of the Taxi Licensing Sub-Committee held on 17 July, 5 August, 19 August and 27 August 2002. The Committee also considered the Addendum report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management which set out the work programme/recommendations from the Sub-Committee and the timetable associated with the Peer Review of the current licensing standards and conditions.

The Head of Revenue and Housing Management reported on the recommendations emanating from the Peer Review, which had concluded on 4 September.

During debate Members endorsed the recommendations of the Peer Group as they related to standards and conditions.

The Peer Group had expressed concern that the Council was exposing itself to unnecessary risk in maintaining in-house testing as a pre-licensing requirement when a tester does not hold at least level one in the Institute of Advanced Drivers examinations. In favour of retaining a developed in-house test facility, reference was made to the value of maintaining high standards. Against retaining a test, reference was made to problems which could be associated with continuity and the improved driving standards which could be associated with a Peer Group proposal that drivers should have at least three years experience prior to being licensed. Reference was made to the fact that it would be in the interests of taxi proprietors to employ good drivers.

A motion that there no longer be an in-house test requirement, moved by Cllr J E Grey and seconded by Cllr A J Humphreys, was agreed by the Committee. The Committee also agreed a motion, moved by Cllr M G B Starke and seconded by Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn, that drivers should have held a full licence to drive a motor car for not less than three years immediately prior to making on application for a Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Licence.

The Head of Revenue and Housing Management confirmed that he would ensure that the standards and conditions documentation was adjusted to include provision for electronic means of communication where appropriate.

In discussing the Taxi Licensing Sub-Committee's proposals for the creation of taxi stands the Committee endorsed a motion, moved by Cllr M G B Starke and seconded by Cllr G E Mockford that, to maximise the facility for public parking in North Street, Rochford, there should be an additional two bays in Back Lane rather than two bays in North Street.

It was noted that the Office of Fair Trading was about to commence a review of the Taxi trade regulation. The Council's current review would be timely in that regard.

Members thanked the Head of Revenue and Housing Management for his contributions to the review process.

On a motion moved by Cllr Mrs L Hungate and seconded by Cllr J E Grey it was:-

Resolved

- (1) That the Council does not provide free accommodation for driver training but would expect to know details of the training.
- (2) That there be no change to the current provision for vehicles to carry signage/advertising, subject to compliance with laws and there being no detriment to the Council's conditions.
- (3) That the review of charges for licensing functions dovetail into the 2003/4 budget process with the proviso that the service be self-financing.
- (4) That the Notes of the 23/25 January 2002 consultation meetings not be made public.
- (5) That the 2002/03 Hackney Carriage Fare Review be effective from 1 October 2002 (subject to the advertisement process) as set out on the appendix to report to the Sub-Committee.
- (6) That the support received from local Members of Parliament in an attempt to speed up Criminal Record Bureau checks on drivers be noted.

- (7) That the:

Pre-licensing Standards for Hackney Carriages
Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence Conditions
Pre-licensing Standards for Private Hire Vehicles
Private Hire Vehicle Licence Conditions
Pre-licensing Conditions for Hackney Carriage Drivers
Pre-licensing Conditions for Private Hire Vehicle Drivers
Hackney Carriage Drivers Licence Conditions
Private Hire Vehicle Drivers Licence Conditions
Pre-licensing Conditions for Private Hire Vehicle Operators
Private Hire Vehicle Operators Licence Conditions

As amended to align with the recommendations emanating from the Peer Review and appended to these minutes, be agreed

- (8) That the Head of Service reports to the Policy and Finance Committee on 10 September 2002 on:-
- Delivery of a cost-neutral Hackney Carriage Licensing function
 - Adequate staffing levels to cover all administration and enforcement.
 - Integration with other transport-related functions.
- (9) That the Knowledge Test and pass rate, as considered by the Taxi Licensing Sub-Committee on 27 August 2002, be adopted.
- (10) That taxi stands be created as follows, subject to the usual consultation process:-
- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 7 bay Stand | High Street, Rayleigh on the outside of existing taxi lagoon |
| 2 bay Stand | High Street, Rayleigh outside 12 – 16 High Street, operational 6pm to 6am daily |
| 3 bay Stand | London Hill, Rayleigh outside British Legion Hall, operational 6pm to 6am daily |
| 5 bay Stand | Back Lane, Rochford in Car Park on Western Boundary by Renouf's Hotel |
- (11) That the District of Rochford Off Street Parking Places Order be amended to facilitate (10) above.

- (12) That the Head of Service bring a further report to the next meeting of this Committee with proposals to supplement the existing three taxi stands in Hockley Town Centre.
- (13) That contract vehicles may be licensed in a private hire environment without the need for a taximeter or signage, and without the word 'TAXI' appearing anywhere on the vehicle or Operated in a Hackney Carriage environment with an operating taximeter and signage. (HRHM)

Note: Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn wished to be recorded as voting against resolution (4) above.

402 PUBLIC CONSULTATION EXERCISE – NEW DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION REGULATIONS

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Housing, Health and Community Care on a consultation paper published by the Government on proposals to replace the existing Environmental Information Regulations 1992.

Responding to Member questions, the Head of Housing, Health and Community Care advised that:

- costing projections could not be easily identified until final regulations are published. The Head of Financial Services would report any additional costs.
- The duty is on the District Council to prioritise and investigate high risk sites.

Resolved

That the comments detailed in the report of the Head of Housing, Health & Community Care be this Council's response to the Consultation Paper "New Draft Environmental Information Regulations". (HHHCC)

403 REFUSE COLLECTION - BANK HOLIDAY PERIODS

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) on proposals for the notification of revised refuse collection timetables.

Resolved

That the annual four page leaflet detailed in the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) be agreed, backed up by information in Rochford District Matters, Website advertisements and flyers under the lids of bins. (CD(F&ES))

404 CAR PARK CUSTOMER SURVEY - RESULTS

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue & Housing Management on the latest car park survey results.

It was noted that the Police felt that effective lighting could be more of a crime deterrent than closed-circuit television.

The Chairman extended thanks to the Revenue & Housing Management Division for undertaking this exercise and it was:-

Resolved

- (1) That the report and survey be noted and a further survey be carried out during Autumn 2003.
- (2) That the results of the survey be considered when the review of parking policy takes place as part of the budget cycle. (HRHM)

405 TOWN CENTRE MAPS IN CAR PARKS

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue & Housing Management on the installation of maps in Council car parks by Atlas UK Ltd. on a free of charge basis.

Responding to Member questions, the Head of Revenue & Housing Management advised that:-

- the Authority could be specific on the location of the signs/the appropriateness of advertising, but not the size of boards;
- maintenance would be the responsibility of the supplier - other Local Authorities had indicated that Atlas UK Ltd. had a good reputation in this regard.

During debate the Committee concurred with the view of a Member that it would be of value if Officers could further investigate the possibilities for introducing appropriate signage in Rochford Town Square.

Resolved

- (1) That the offer from Atlas UK Limited to provide, install and maintain information signs be accepted.
- (2) That signs be installed at the following locations:-

Back Lane, Rochford
Southend Road, Hockley
The Market, Rayleigh
Websters Way, Rayleigh
Castle Road, Rayleigh
Bellingham Lane, Rayleigh
Mill Hall, Rayleigh
- (3) That Officers further investigate the possibilities for introducing information appropriate signage in Rochford Town Square.
- (4) That authority be delegated to the Head of Revenue and Housing Management to authorise any future improvements/ initiatives concerning car park signage. (HRHM)

406 REPORTING OF UNLICENSED VEHICLES IN COUNCIL CAR PARKS

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue & Housing Management on an initiative put forward by the Driver & Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA) which involved Local Authority Car Park Patrol Officers fixing a warning notice to the windscreens of unlicensed vehicles in Council Car Parks.

Responding to Member questions the Head of Revenue & Housing Management advised that all Council Car Parks (whether fee paying or not) were patrolled.

Resolved

- (1) That authority be delegated to the Head of Revenue and Housing Management to determine the introduction of the initiative put forward by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority.
- (2) That progress on this matter be reported in the Member's Bulletin.(HRHM)

Environmental Services Committee - 5 September 2002

The Meeting closed at 10.24 pm.

Chairman: _____

Date: _____