

Environmental Services Committee – 6 July 2004

Minutes of the meeting of the **Environmental Services Committee** held on **6 July 2004** when there were present:-

Cllr J E Grey (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs T J Capon (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr R A Amner
Cllr T G Cutmore
Cllr Mrs L Hungate
Cllr C J Lumley
Cllr J M Pullen

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

VISITING MEMBER

Cllr C I Black

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs R G S Choppen and P R Robinson.

OFFICERS PRESENT

S Clarkson	- Head of Revenue and Housing Management
S Scrutton	- Head of Planning Services
D Timson	- Property Maintenance & Highways Manager
J Crawford	- Transportation Manager
M Martin	- Committee Administrator

289 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 May 2004 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

290 PROGRESS ON DECISIONS

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

Village and Town Centre Regeneration Schemes (Minute 318(03)/03)

The Hockley scheme was completed and in Hullbridge the highway was completed and the forecourts were to be completed during the forthcoming week. (CD(F&ES))

Assessment of Odour Emissions from the Stambridge Sewage Treatment Works (Minute 578/03)

Three quotations had been received. Officers would ensure that Members of the Committee were provided with an update of the latest position. (HHHCC)

Air Quality Review and Assessment (Minute 59/04)

The additional monitoring recommended within the centre of Rochford had been provided. Members would be provided with confirmation of when the evaluation of the results would be reported back to the Committee.

Websters Way – Environmental Enhancement (Minute 115/04)

A response was still awaited from Rayleigh Town Council and Essex County Council and this would be fed into the budget process for next year. (HPS)

Management Scheme for the Essex Estuaries European Marine Site (Minute 117/04)

Members of the Committee would be provided with an update of the latest progress on the consultation with other local authorities. (HPS)

Taxi Licensing (Minute 118/04)

The next meeting of the Taxi Licensing Sub-Committee had been re-scheduled to 20 July 2004. (HRHM)

Education Contributions from Residential Developments – Draft Supplementary Guidance (Minute 158/04)

The public consultation was nearing completion and a report would be brought back in September. (HPS)

Decriminalised Parking Enforcement – Progress Report (Minute 160/04)

The agreement had been received in respect of membership of the National Parking Adjudication Service and details were included in the quarterly progress report for DPE which would be considered as the next item on the agenda. (HRHM)

Formation of a Groundwork Trust for the Thames Gateway South Essex Area (Minute 163/04)

A further report on the latest position would be brought to this Committee in September. (CD(F&ES))

291 DECRIMINALISED PARKING ENFORCEMENT – PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee received the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management which updated Members on progress towards implementing Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) in the Rochford District.

Members noted that:-

- Progress towards the implementation was proceeding smoothly and was in line with the action plan.

- All staff would be in place by 1 August, with the exception of existing traffic wardens transferring from Essex Police.
- Signage would be placed at the following boundary locations within the District:-

Chelmsford Road
Rawreth Lane
A129 – London Road, Rayleigh
High Road, Rayleigh
A1015 – Eastwood Road
Cherry Orchard Lane
B1013 – Warners Bridge
Sutton Road, Rochford
Silchester Corner, Great Wakering
B1017 – Wakering Road

- A new patrol vehicle had been ordered and the existing patrol vehicle would be sprayed in the corporate colour of green.

Members expressed concern that officers were recommending, in line with other Essex authorities, that as this Council had no residents' parking bays, permits should not be given to categories of people, such as carers, for parking where on-street parking restrictions existed, as they could be open to abuse and many other organisations (some from the private sector) could argue a similar case. It was felt that consideration ought to be given to the cost implications of issuing permits or giving dispensations, and whether some dispensations could be made chargeable.

In response to Member questions, the following was noted:-

- The four parking attendants currently employed by the Council together with the two transferring from the Police would be in close contact with the Police in respect of endorsable parking offences such as parking too close to a junction or parking on an urban clearway. However, a positive response by the Police could not be guaranteed.
- The Traffic Management Bill, which was currently passing through Parliament would probably result in local authorities assuming even greater responsibility for other parking and "moving traffic" offences.
- The vehicles used for patrol would be the Suzuki Carry 1.3 model.

Resolved

That this Council gives serious consideration to the provision of "paid for" parking permits or dispensations for additional categories of drivers, such as carers, with a report being brought back to this Committee before the end of December 2004. (HRHM)

292 COMMUNITY TRANSPORT – FIRST SIX MONTH OPERATION REPORT

The Committee noted the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management on the development of the Community Transport and Social Car Scheme in its first six months of operation.

293 CAR PARKS CUSTOMER SURVEY – RESULTS

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management which provided the results of the biennial Car Parks Customer Survey, together with the observations of the Head of Service.

Members noted that:-

- the survey forms had been handed out to people as they returned to their vehicles in car parks and this had resulted in an increased response of around 5/6%.
- signage would shortly be provided at the car parks with advertising on one side and a map of the district on the other indicating the number of possible parking spaces.
- An alternative quieter form of access control mechanism was being investigated for the Back Lane car park in Rochford, following complaints from local residents.

The most common issues raised by the survey would be considered with the review of parking policy scheduled to take place in September, together with other issues highlighted by Members such as:-

- the Freight House car park
- better lighting around the Back Lane car park
- flooding in Locks Hill after heavy rain.

Resolved

- (1) That a further car park customer survey be carried out during autumn 2005.
- (2) That the results of the survey are considered when the review of parking policy takes place in September. (HRHM)

294 ESSEX SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLAN 2004-2009

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning Services, which sought Members' comments on the draft Essex School Organisation Plan 2004-2009 and highlighted the implications for Rochford District.

The Head of Planning Services confirmed that the projected number of pupils in 2009 shown at paragraph 5.1 should have read 6,240 instead of 6,575.

Members highlighted the fact that the figures should be monitored closely as Section 106 agreements were based on these forecasts. It was noted that in terms of future housing allocation, the local education authority stated that it would monitor housing development and take this into account when looking at the provision of future school places.

In particular, Members expressed concern at the following:-

- the projected deficit of both primary and secondary school places, given the current and proposed levels of housing provision, particularly in Rayleigh.
- the significant levels of cross border movement from Southend.
- the need for mid-term flexibility in schools so that pupils moving into the area would be able to secure places.

Resolved

That, subject to the inclusion of Member comments, the report forms the basis of a response to the Local Education Authority on the draft Essex School Organisation Plan 2004-2009. (HPS)

295 OUR ENVIRONMENT BEST VALUE REVIEW – FINAL REPORT

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning Services which outlined the conclusions of the Best Value Review of Our Environment and proposed an Action Plan for service improvement.

Members highlighted the following areas of concern:-

- Weed removal on footways and passages as well as town centres.
- Grass cuttings not removed from verges.
- Graffiti removal – officers confirmed that problems often occurred where graffiti was on private property and permission was then more difficult to obtain. This should be considered by the Parish Liaison Sub-Committee.

Resolved

That the actions included in the draft 'Our Environment' Best Value Review Action Plan be agreed, with appropriate items being included within the draft budget strategy for 2005/06. (HPS)

296 CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE AWARDS 2004-07-06

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning Services which sought Members' agreement with regard to the appointment of a Member Panel to judge the entries to the Rochford Design, Heritage and Conservation Awards for 2004.

Resolved

That the following five Members be nominated to form a panel to judge the 2004 Rochford Design, Heritage and Conservation Awards.

Cllr R A Amner

Cllr P A Capon

Cllr C J Lumley

Cllr Mrs M S Vince

Cllr Mrs M J Webster

(HPS)

297 PAPER AND PLASTIC RECYCLING BANKS

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) which sought Members' approval to the siting of eight plastic recycling banks around the district, by utilising some of the savings made through a new contract for the paper banks.

Members noted that the proposed sites were as follows:-

Ashingdon playing field

Back Lane, Rochford

Fairview playing field, Rayleigh

Great Wakering Sports Centre

Pooles Lane, Hullbridge

Rawreth Lane football ground

Southend Road car park, Hockley

Websters Way car park, Rayleigh

Resolved

That eight plastic recycling banks be located around the District from 1 October 2004 and that a press release be issued to this effect. (CD(F&ES))

298 WINTER SERVICE REVIEW – HIGHWAYS

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) which advised Members of a consultation being carried out by Essex County Council Highways Services regarding the winter maintenance service (winter gritting).

Members were advised that:-

- a small gritter was available to salt the Council's car parks and that this had been carried out last winter.
- salt bins around the district were provided for the use of the public footways and not for private use.

Environmental Services Committee – 6 July 2004

Resolved

- (1) That a formal response to the consultation be sent to Essex County Council, based on the officer's report.
- (2) That an article be placed in an appropriate edition of Rochford District Matters advising residents about car park gritting and providing a reminder that the salt bins provided around the district are not for public use. (CD(F&ES))

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm.

Chairman

Date