

Central Area Committee – 24 October 2007

Minutes of the meeting of the **Central Area Committee** held on **24 October 2007** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr D G Stansby
Vice-Chairman: Cllr Mrs C A Weston

Cllr Mrs R Brown

Cllr Mrs L A Butcher

Cllr P A Capon

Cllr M R Carter

Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn

Cllr J R F Mason

Cllr M G B Starke

Cllr J Thomass

ALSO PRESENT

Cllr Mrs M A Weir - Hawkwell Parish Council

Cllr B Hazelwood - Hockley Parish Council

Cllr Miss A Marriott - Hullbridge Parish Council

L Harvey - County Highways

OFFICERS PRESENT

A Bugeja - Head of Legal Services

R Evans - Head of Environmental Services

J Bostock - Principal Committee Administrator

351 AREA COMMITTEE - INITIAL BUSINESS

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from District Councillors Mrs L M Cox, K H Hudson and P R Robinson and Sally-Anne Thallon, Essex County Council.

Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Declarations of Interests

Councillor Mrs H L A Glynn declared a personal interest in any items relating to Hawkwell by virtue of being a Member of Hawkwell Parish Council.

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

352 COMMUNITY FORUM

Requests for information had been received in advance of the meeting and a document summarising these, together with officer responses, was circulated to all those present. A list of these is appended.

It was observed that the majority of questions received at the meeting related to the Council's policies for new development (including flats) and infrastructure. The written response relating to a question received from C P A Edwards of Hockley in advance of the meeting (included in the Appendix) addressed these aspects (a list of all those asking related questions is also included in the Appendix). The policies were available for viewing on request or via the Council's website. The Authority was required to take account of the policy framework when considering individual planning applications.

With regard to a question on publicity from J Stracey of Hullbridge it was noted that Area Committees were a relatively new forum for which associated publicity had been developed. With regard to a question from R Laybourn of Hullbridge it was noted that the Council was considering tourism opportunities across the District, including the potential of the riverside setting at Hullbridge. Tourism proposals would be the subject of public consultation.

The Chairman advised that the question from R Avery of Hockley on encouraging bus companies to operate a service over Coventry Hill would be raised at a meeting of Essex County Council passenger representatives on 19 November.

The County Council had previously indicated that it would assist with the making up of unadopted roads in locations such as Hullbridge. However, given the number of such roads across the County as a whole, additional sums of money would be required. Lyn Harvey would raise the question of the making up of unadopted roads in Hullbridge with the current County Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation, Councillor N Hume. Individuals/groups could also lobby Councillor Hume direct.

It was noted that, whilst planning applications were considered on individual merit, Government Planning Inspectors can sometimes override a local authority decision if an applicant chooses to appeal. Councillors had a number of concerns about the ability of Government to override local decisions.

353 SPOTLIGHT ISSUES

(1) Update on Highways Matters within Hawkwell, Hockley and Hullbridge

Road resurfacing work had been completed in two small sections of Greensward Lane and further footway surfacing is to take place on the Southend Road between the Spa Hotel and Great Eastern Road. County Trading Standards intended to undertake enforcement action against vehicles abusing the weight restriction in Watery Lane in January.

Responding to questions, Lyn Harvey advised:-

- That whilst there are always demands on the budget, enquiries would be made on the possibility of extending the white lines introduced near

Bullwood Hall to Fountain Lane (this being a location where there is little lighting to facilitate a view of the kerb).

- A one-way arrangement for Watery Lane and Beeches Road could be a consideration for improving traffic flow and be an appropriate means of accident reduction but will need to be looked at in much greater detail.

(2) Introducing Measures to Deal with Irresponsible Dog Ownership

The Committee received a presentation from Richard Evans, Head of Environmental Services, on the possibility of introducing measures to deal with irresponsible dog ownership. The presentation included:-

- The need for the public's view on dog control.
- Consultation, aims and goals.
- Monitoring and enforcement.

It was noted that a report with final recommendations would be submitted to the Council's Executive Board in December 2007.

Responding to questions, the Head of Environmental Services advised that:-

- Regulation can be applied to any areas where the public have access (unless the land owner provides otherwise).
- Enforcement activity should be undertaken in tandem with education.
- In terms of issues of dog fouling/lack of related signage at Hockley Woods, the Woods is currently not covered by controls.
- Surveys (both electronic via the Council's website and postal) had been undertaken.
- Fixed Penalties associated with prosecution would be retained by the Local Authority. Fines imposed by Court are received by Government.
- Notwithstanding that account would need to be taken of existing duties, it would be appropriate for consideration to be given as to whether the wider officer resource (such as parking attendants) may be able to assist with enforcement.
- In terms of evidence for enforcement, it was considered that generally an enforcement officer would need to witness an offence.
- Proposals would include the introduction of a pilot enforcement scheme to reinforce the message.

354 CENTRAL AREA UPDATE

The Committee received the Central Area update.

Brays Lane Signs (09/07)

It was noted that three signs were being replaced.

New Bridle Path on Western Side of Clements Hall (12/07)

The notes of a site meeting held on 22 October were circulated. It was noted that the Property Maintenance & Highways Manager would develop options for consideration by the Committee. It was hoped that solutions could be in place by April 2008 with reports to the Executive Board as appropriate. It was requested that, rather than a piece meal approach, this matter should be considered from a wider perspective and take account of the need to link with bridle way routes across the District.

Community Shelter – Clements Hall Recreation Field

It was noted that Hawkwell Parish Council had now obtained estimates relating to the cost of a teen shelter.

The meeting closed at 8.47 pm.

Chairman

Date

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

Question

CRA Edwards, Hockley

Is there an approved policy for planning permission to requests that seek to increase the number of dwellings/flats on a site by at least three fold?

Response

The Council has a series of policies included in its adopted Local Plan, which are intended to examine the acceptability of proposals for development within existing residential areas, together with a series of Supplementary Planning Documents. Policies relevant to proposals for new houses or flats are:-

Policy HP11 – flatted accommodation
 Policy HP3 – density of development
 Policy HP4 – design statements
 Policy HP5 – Infrastructure
 Policy HP6 – Design and Layout

The Local Plan can be viewed on the Council's website or at the offices in Rochford or Rayleigh. It should also be noted that the Council also has to take into account national planning advice published by the government – Planning Policy Statement No. 3 Housing provides information about planning and housing.

Questions relating to new development and infrastructure were also received from Hullbridge residents Mrs C A Allen; Mrs Bevan; K Brown; Mrs W Clarke; P F Dawberry; Mr and Mrs Ellis; Mrs Hatch; Mrs J Grenfell; B Marsden-Carleton; Mr Monk; Mrs Perry; W and P Roberts; Mrs K Smith; J Sutton and Mr and Mrs Taylor.

Question

Brian Guyett, Hockley

The recent RDC Review Committee Report made several recommendations about the need to improve youth facilities in the area in line with Government targets.

The report to the Area Committee details virtually solely the activities being lead by Hawkwell Parish Council with no indication of RDC's own thinking and plans in this regard. Would the Committee please advise what action RDC will be taking to meet the

Response

The Council is currently engaging with a number of partner organisations specifically around the provision of facilities for young people, including the Hawkwell / Hockley / Ashingdon project but also around additional facilities in Great Wakering, where these discussions have involved not only the Parish Council but also the County Council Youth Service, local Police and the Star Partnership. There are specific allocations in both the District Council and Parish Councils' budgets for the Great Wakering project. This partnership

recommendations of the Review Committee?

working will continue, as will the many other initiatives that are currently taking place such as the HYPER programme (diversionary activities for children at risk of anti-social behaviour) that is in now in place in Wakering, Hawkwell and Rayleigh.

Question

Don Avery, Hockley

Can the bus companies be encouraged to operate a service over Coventry Hill, on weekdays hourly to either Hockley Spa, Rochford/Ashingdon, Rayleigh Rail Station to connect with other routes to the Hospital or Southend Travel Centre. One suggestion is to run Route 20C through from Coventry Corner to Ashingdon to connect with Service 7? If such a service were to operate then car use and the resultant congestion and pollution could be reduced. It would also enable non-car owners to obtain better access to Health and other services.

Response

Neither Essex County Council nor Rochford District Council has any direct say in the decisions taken by the bus companies about routes. That having been said, the suggestion certainly merits support and it is proposed that the bus companies be contacted and asked for their views.