

West Area Committee – 2 April 2008

Minutes of the meeting of the **West Area Committee** held on **2 April 2008** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr J M Pullen
Vice-Chairman: Cllr S P Smith

Cllr Mrs P Aves	Cllr D Merrick
Cllr C I Black	Cllr Mrs J A Mockford
Cllr Mrs J Dillnutt	Cllr R A Oatham
Cllr A J Humphries	Cllr Mrs M J Webster
Cllr C J Lumley	Cllr P F A Webster
Cllr Mrs J R Lumley	

ALSO PRESENT

Cllr A Matthews	- Rawreth Parish Council
Cllr Miss P Weaver	- Rayleigh Town Council
D Lawrence	- Essex County Council

OFFICERS PRESENT

S Fowler	- Head of Information and Customer Services
S Scrutton	- Head of Planning and Transportation
L Jefferys	- Leisure and Cultural Service Manager
P McKenna	- Woodlands and Environmental Officer
S Worthington	- Committee Administrator

129 AREA COMMITTEE – INITIAL BUSINESS

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr J E Grey.

Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2008 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment:-

Page 5, paragraph 3, replace the end of the first sentence with the following:-

“... while the no. 24 bus travelling from Asda down to Down Hall Road was always empty”.

Declarations of Interest

Cllr A J Humphries declared a personal interest in item 4(3) of the agenda relating to Rayleigh Leisure Centre youth pitches by virtue of being acquainted with some club representatives present at this meeting.

Cllr Miss P Weaver declared a personal interest in items 4(1), 4(3) and 5 of the agenda by virtue of membership of Rayleigh Town Council.

130 COMMUNITY FORUM

A document summarising questions raised at the meeting is appended.

At this point the Committee re-convened into formal session.

131 SPOTLIGHT ISSUES

(1) Update on Highways Matters within the Rawreth and Rayleigh Areas

County Highways was currently engaged in finalising work from the last financial year. The programme of works for the new financial year will be finalised shortly and there will be a lot more detailed information available at the next Area Committee meeting.

Victoria Avenue, Rayleigh from its junction with London Road is due to be re-surfaced. Ferry Road, Hullbridge will be re-surfaced along its length and parts of Lower Road, Hullbridge will also be surface-dressed.

In response to a query relating to time restrictions for car parking in Little Wheatley Chase, the County Highways officer confirmed that an update would be provided at the next meeting.

Responding to a Member question with respect to progress on the gas mains replacement work in Rayleigh, the County Highways officer confirmed that National Grid was working to programme, starting broadly on the west side of Rayleigh, working towards the east. More detailed information relating to the programme would be provided at the next meeting.

The County Highways officer advised, in response to a Member enquiry relating to the provision of a pedestrian crossing at the top of Downhall Park Way, near Rawreth Lane, that there had been a shortfall in the Section 106 Agreement monies and the finances needed to complete the crossing. It was likely that the money would have to be returned to the developer as it had not been spent within the specified deadline.

Responding to a supplementary question relating to the cost of the pedestrian crossing, the officer confirmed that the Section 106 Agreement total of about £73,000 fell short by £40,000 of the costs of providing the crossing, and it had not been possible for the Highways Authority to make up the shortfall from other funds.

Members expressed concern that this matter had not been reported to District Members during the past 6 years. There was a general consensus that a

letter of complaint should be sent to the County Council. Members observed that there would be merit in a report going to Council summarising all Section 106 Agreement monies within the past 6 years, highlighting those close to expiry.

In response to an enquiry relating to the costs of providing the crossing, officers advised that the Section 106 Agreement monies had been in order to provide a pegasus crossing, specifically designed to allow horses to cross Rawreth Lane; the costs of such a crossing were higher than those of other types of crossing.

In response to a Member observation that it should have been possible to budget for the £40,000 shortfall during the 6-year period, the County Highways officer advised that he would look into the background of this matter and would report back to the Committee.

Members concurred that officers should negotiate with the developer to see whether an extension could be made for the Section 106 Agreement money, and exploring the possibilities of alternative budgets for the crossing or a less expensive pedestrian crossing. Members of the Committee should be kept informed of progress.

Officers confirmed that a Section 106 contribution had also been received from Asda and that consideration was now being given to other improvements that might be carried out in Rawreth Lane; if the money for the Pegasus crossing could be secured, the County Council would look to implement a more comprehensive set of highway improvements in Rawreth Lane.

On a Motion moved by Cllr R A Oatham and seconded by Cllr C I Black it was:-

Resolved

That a letter of complaint should be sent to the County Council with respect to the handling of the Section 106 Agreement money for the provision of a pedestrian crossing in Downhall Park Way, Rayleigh. (HPT)

(2) Update on the Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park

The Committee received a presentation on the background history to the development of the Cherry Orchard Jubilee country park. An OS map detailing both the existing land in the park and the proposed extension was distributed. The consultative process was continuing to identify the facilities that various user groups would like to see in the park. Questionnaires had been completed by residents throughout the District via *Rochford District Matters* and website surveys.

The Country Park was now well used and the first phase of development had been successfully completed. It had been identified on the District Council's

Core Strategy that there was potential to extend the park to the west and east of the current boundaries. A planning application for change of use to a Country Park and for vehicular access from the B1013 had been granted. The area marked on the map as A / A1 would be owned by the District Council within the next 6 weeks; area B would take longer as a compulsory purchase order was necessary. An outline design would be produced in November 2008 and presented to Members for their input and discussion would continue to take place with the various user groups. The plans would include highway access via the B1013, a car park and toilet block, together with further tree planting, widening of the stream, the planting of an orchard at the entrance to the site.

In response to Member enquiries the following points were noted:-

- The Southend on Sea boundary was just to the north of Green Lane, at the middle of the site. The Britannia Business Park was at the eastern boundary.
- The car park would be situated in area B, entering via the B1013.
- Visitors currently access the park via the footpaths and bridle ways, from Green Lane, Cherry Orchard Way. There is a Council leaflet providing more details, and details are also to be found on the Council website.
- It was envisaged that there would be vehicular access and car parking at the park in approximately 2 years.

(3) Rayleigh Leisure Centre Youth Pitches

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Community Services providing Members with an update on the development of youth football pitches at the rear of Rayleigh leisure centre.

One Member observed that leasing the pitches out could be the best way of keeping costs down for the District Council. Members concurred that the report did not contain sufficient details for any decision to be taken with respect to choosing any of the interested football clubs.

In response to concern expressed that local football clubs would not be able to afford maintenance costs of £7,000 per annum, officers advised that the clubs had indicated that repairs and maintenance would be undertaken on a voluntary basis, thus considerably reducing costs.

Members indicated that any lease agreement needed to be consistent with other Council lease arrangements. In addition, Members stressed the importance of making the pitches available for informal kick-about, when otherwise not in use.

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

- A final decision on the pitches would be taken by the Executive Board.
- 70 car parking spaces would be provided.
- A decision would need to be taken as to whether to lease the pitches to a club or to let the pitches as part of the current grounds maintenance agreement.
- The football clubs could be helped by the Council's Leisure team in obtaining grants for purchasing specialist equipment, etc.
- The clubs could hire out the pitches to other clubs at times when they had no fixtures.
- The Council had incurred the expense of ecological and arboricultural surveys and would be financing the drainage and other associated ground works. If a club were to take the area under a lease agreement, they would be responsible for future ground works, lining of pitches, grass cutting and erecting goals.
- There was the possibility of a pavilion on site; changing facilities were included within the scheme; plans had not yet been submitted for this.

132 WEST AREA UPDATE

The Committee received the West Area update.

02/07 – Rayleigh West Sewage Works (Minute 238/07)

It was noted that the Police had been monitoring HGVs using the Beeches Road / Watery Lane route and had stopped many vehicles and given out cautions. Close monitoring was taking place.

07/07 – The Bridge on the Old Chelmsford Road (Minute 239/07)

Officers advised that an environmental study was required because the works were in the vicinity of a water course which could be inhabited by newts.

23/07 – Unauthorised Travellers' Site on A1245 (Minute 287/07)

In response to an enquiry relating to whether this site was being considered as an official travellers' site, officers confirmed that the Executive Board had agreed a review of all sites within the District in the near future.

It was observed that access to the site on the A1245 was dangerous from the road; it was badly positioned and was, in addition, an eyesore.

25/07 – Improvements to Wet Side Changing Rooms and Showers at Clements Hall Leisure Centre (Minute 340/07)

It was observed that none of the works referred to in the update had been implemented as of 29 March 2008. It was confirmed that Cllr P F A Webster would be provided with an update outside the meeting.

29/07 – The Status of Priory Chase (Minute 340/07)

It was anticipated that Priory Chase would be adopted by the end of this calendar year.

34/07 – Uneven Road Surface in Rawreth Lane in the vicinity of Trenders Avenue (Minute 340/07)

The County Highways officer confirmed that consideration could be given in the following financial year to including Rawreth Lane in the surfacing programme; County Highways were monitoring Rawreth Lane for any signs of carriageway deterioration.

45/07 – Speeding and Traffic-Related Problems in Rawreth Lane (Minute 339/07)

It was not known whether any responses had yet been received to letters sent out to residents; an update would be provided to Cllr A J Humphries outside the meeting, to include any reasons why a 5-day car parking restriction could not be introduced.

44/07 – Flooding in Rawreth (Minute 410/07)

It was agreed that a copy of the letter from the Environment Agency should be sent to Ward Councillors and the Parish Council.

47/07 – Youngsters Drinking Asda-Branded Alcohol Outside St Nicholas School Area, Rawreth (Minute 409/07)

Members observed that they would like to see the Police doing more in relation to these incidents.

45/07 – Speeding and Traffic-Related Problems in Rawreth Lane (Minute 339/07)

It was noted that the consultation period ended on 15 April.

03/08 – No. 3 Bus Service from Chelmsford to Southend (Minute 02/08)

In response to an enquiry relating to an *Evening Echo* article on the no. 3 bus service, officers confirmed that it was the County Council and not the District

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Council that was under-writing the no. 3 bus service.

08/08 – Speeding in Victoria Avenue, Rayleigh (Minute 62/08)

In response to a concern expressed that the last speeding survey was done 3 years previously the County Highways officer confirmed that he would establish whether any monitoring was being undertaken and would report back to the Committee.

09/08 – Extension to the Car Park at Rawreth Recreation Ground (Minute 62/08)

The Executive Board had agreed that this be included as an item for consideration when the 2009/10 budget is under determination.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.

Chairman

Date

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

Question

Response

J Warner, Rayleigh

Can you please give me an update on dealing with damage in the children's play areas in Hartford Close.

A full update is included on page 5.5 of the West Area update report.

Are play areas inspected regularly?

What timescale can be expected for repairs?

J Warner, Rayleigh

Regarding, Pearsons Farm estate, where, when and with whom was the consultation held?

An update is included on page 5.5 of the West Area update report. Responses will be provided to the more detailed questions at the next meeting.

One dog bin at the junction of Cheapside West and Victoria Avenue does not resolve the problem for the Maine Crescent, Hartford Close, Salem Walk area. We need dog bins, litter bins, regular litter clearance and general tidy up of undergrowth, hedges, etc.

Do we still have a caretaker living on the estate? If not, how is maintenance, etc, monitored and how often?

J Warner, Rayleigh

Regarding the new refuse collection arrangements. It is proposed that we will be supplied with 3 wheelie bins. This could result in practical difficulties. What size will the new bins be? Some householders have limited choice as to where they can keep them.

A detailed publicity / communications campaign is in place and all residents will get this information in good time, prior to new arrangements starting in June. This will be closely monitored and there will be a dedicated telephone hotline to deal with any queries from residents.

Will all 3 bins need to be put out on the same day and be emptied at the same time?

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Question

Response

Can we have assurances that the changes will be closely monitored, please? Any teething problems will need to be resolved promptly.

P Plummer, Rawreth

Why has barbed wire been put up at the football field on the Old London Road?

A response will be provided at the next meeting.

J Warner, Rayleigh

Regarding a broken drain cover on the grass area between No. 4 Hartford Close and No. 9 Maine Crescent. I first reported this to Highways about 2 years ago and more recently on 26 January and 24 February 2008. No repairs have been undertaken. This is potentially dangerous. How long should we expect repairs to take?

The County Highways officer was unaware of this problem having been reported but would follow this up and respond directly to the resident.