

West Area Committee – 16 October 2007

Minutes of the meeting of the **West Area Committee** held on **16 October 2007** when there were present:-

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

Cllr C I Black
Cllr Mrs J Dillnutt
Cllr J E Grey
Cllr A J Humphries
Cllr T Livings
Cllr C J Lumley

Cllr Mrs J R Lumley
Cllr Mrs J A Mockford
Cllr R A Oatham
Cllr Mrs M J Webster
Cllr P F A Webster

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs P Aves and D Merrick.

ALSO PRESENT

Cllr A Matthews	- Rawreth Parish Council
Cllr Miss P Weaver	- Rayleigh Town Council
S Brown	- Virgin Active
T Hine	- Virgin Active
D Lawrence	- County Highways

OFFICERS PRESENT

J Bourne	- Head of Community Services
R Evans	- Head of Environmental Services
S Fowler	- Head of Information and Customer Services
S Worthington	- Committee Administrator

338 AREA COMMITTEE INITIAL BUSINESS

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs P Aves and D Merrick.

Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment:-

Replace 'Purleigh Way' with 'Purleigh Road' in the final line of the third paragraph on page 3.

Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Mrs J Dillnutt, J E Grey, A J Humphries, Mrs J R Lumley, Mrs J A

Mockford, R A Oatham and Miss P Weaver each declared a personal interest in item 4(3) of the agenda relating to a tree for Rayleigh town centre, by virtue of membership of Rayleigh Town Council.

Cllrs C J Lumley and J M Pullen each declared a personal interest in the same item by virtue of membership of the Rayleigh Town Council Christmas Lights Committee.

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

339 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, together with further questions received, is appended.

340 SPOTLIGHT ISSUES

(1) Virgin Active Leisure Contract Progress

Members considered the report of the Head of Community Services providing an update on the progress and development of the leisure management contract. The Chairman welcomed Mr T Hine and Mr S Brown of Virgin Active to the meeting. It was noted that Mr Brown had been promoted to Regional General Manager for the Virgin Active midlands region and that Mr Hine was appointed as his replacement as Contracts Manager in May 2007.

A refresh programme would be implemented at most of the contract sites; Mill Hall and Castle Hall would be completely re-painted in the Virgin Active corporate colours.

In response to questions, the following was noted:-

- Capital investment had been requested for improvements to the wet side changing rooms at Clements Hall for January 2008.
- Virgin Active would investigate different options to address the issue of evening reception cover at the Mill Hall.
- Funding was the primary obstacle to providing a swimming pool in Rayleigh; there was sufficient space within the vicinity of the leisure centre for a swimming pool.
- Data relating to the number of people using the facilities at Rayleigh Leisure Centre could be provided on a quarterly basis; there were

approximately 12,000 visitors to the leisure centre per month.

- Discussions were taking place with local schools to ensure that programmes aimed at children were based on actual want and need.
- It was not currently possible to provide a demographical breakdown of users of the Rayleigh Leisure Centre. It was, however, possible that more detailed data might be provided in spring 2008 once harmonisation of Virgin Active's computer systems had been completed.

(2) Update on Highways Matters within Rawreth and Rayleigh

Carriageway re-surfacing works had been completed in Crown Hill, from the station to the High Street, at the Hockley Road/Hambro Hill and Hockley Road/Victoria Road junctions, and in London Road after the railway bridge. There were outstanding re-surfacing works to be done in York Road at the junction with Eastwood Road and a small patch in Crown Hill.

Surface dressing work had been carried out in London Road, Rawreth by the Carpenters Arms and on the Old Chelmsford Road. Footway re-construction work was complete in Love Lane and currently being done in Glebe Drive. Footpath works would commence in Rawreth Lane once the Asda works were completed. Footpath re-construction works would also take place in Grove Road. Footway slurry sealing works would be done in Crown Hill in due course.

It was noted that a written update would be provided to the next meeting on the following issues:-

- The stretch of Victoria Avenue where it adjoins London Road is in need of re-surfacing.
- The hedgerow that was removed in Hambro Parade has still not been re-planted.
- The status of Priory Chase and whether or not it has yet been adopted.
- The possibility of signs being placed in Victoria Avenue alerting motorists to the approach of the pedestrian crossing.
- Problems with sight lines on the High Street in Rayleigh approaching the mini roundabout by the Eastwood Road junction.
- Continued speeding in Little Wheatley Chase. The speed limit signs at the end of Little Wheatley Chase are not illuminated. Speeding and parking issues need to be addressed, given that there is a large

primary school in close proximity.

- Poor condition of the footpath in Little Wheatley Chase.
- Uneven road surface in Rawreth Lane in the vicinity of Trenders Avenue.
- Traffic light phasing in Hatfield Road/London Road; lights appear to change too quickly for traffic going out of Hatfield Road.
- Excessive speeding in Langham Drive/Wheatley Chase/Bardfield Way and limited parking in these roads.
- The possibility of introducing a 20mph speed limit in Glasseys Lane and other roads in that vicinity leading onto Eastwood Road.

In response to a question relating to Picton Gardens/Picton Close, the County officer confirmed that an extension to the double yellow lines was likely to be introduced early in the New Year, on completion of all the necessary legal processes.

Responding to concerns raised with respect to the junctions of The Chase and Grove Road with Eastwood Road, the County officer advised that it would be possible to arrange a site visit for Ward Councillors and Highways officers in order to discuss possible solutions.

(3) Tree for Rayleigh Town Centre

Members considered the report of the Head of Environmental Services relating to a request from Rayleigh Town Council and Rayleigh Mill Rotary Club to replace the memorial tree in front of Holy Trinity Church with an alternative tree. The District Council's arboricultural officer had advised that the area was unsuitable as a large tree would spoil the street scene, although had suggested alternative trees for planting in that location, details of which were outlined in the report.

Although the original request had been made some time ago, there had been delays in addressing the matter as a result of the difficulties associated with establishing ownership of the land. Although it had been suggested that the land might be owned by County Highways, this had proved not to be the case.

Some concern was expressed that any tree planted in this location was likely to be vulnerable to vandalism, as had been the case with the tree currently situated there. It was noted that this matter would be determined by the Town Council.

Resolved

That the contents of the report be noted. (HES)

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

341 WEST AREA UPDATE

Traffic Surveys (13/07)

Local residents contested the reported speeds of approximately 32mph in Purleigh Road, claiming that vehicles were regularly travelling in excess of that speed.

Dog Bins in Langham Road (16/07)

A survey was being conducted in October, the results of which would be reported back to the next meeting.

Additional Air Quality Monitoring (20/07)

Analysis had been conducted of the air quality monitoring; the preliminary results had been forwarded to Defra. A response was currently awaited.

Members observed that there would be merit in conducting additional air quality monitoring in the Rawreth Lane vicinity after the Asda store had opened. An update will be provided to the next meeting.

Unauthorised Travellers' Site on A1245 (23/07)

There was no further progress to report with respect to this site.

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm.

Chairman

Date

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