

## **Environmental Services Committee – 10 November 2005**

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Minutes of the meeting of the **Environmental Services Committee** held on **10 November 2005** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr M G B Starke  
Vice-Chairman: Cllr Mrs L Hungate

Cllr Mrs J A Mockford  
Cllr R A Amner  
Cllr Mrs R Brown  
Cllr K J Gordon

Cllr C J Lumley  
Cllr C G Seagers  
Cllr Mrs M S Vince  
Cllr Mrs M J Webster

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs T J Capon, T G Cutmore and P R Robinson.

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

A Bugeja - Head of Legal Services  
S Clarkson - Head of Revenue and Housing Management  
S Scrutton - Head of Planning Services  
J Bourne - Leisure and Contracts Manager  
J Crawford - Transportation Manager  
A Law - Solicitor  
S Worthington - Committee Administrator

### **COUNTY COUNCIL OFFICERS PRESENT**

P Grimwood - District Manager, County Highways  
A Dellar - Traffic Management Engineer, County Highways

### **437 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2005 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **438 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr C G Seagers declared a personal interest in item 12 of the agenda, relating to bus service 4A, by virtue of being a Member of Great Wakering Parish Council.

Cllr Mrs J A Mockford declared a personal interest in item 11 of the agenda, relating to decriminalised parking enforcement, by virtue of being a Member of Rayleigh Town Council.

### 439 ISSUES ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

#### 1 Report on the Inspector's Report into the Rochford District Replacement Local Plan

The Committee considered the report of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee setting out recommendations relating to the incorporation of changes recommended by the Local Plan Inquiry Inspector into the Rochford District Replacement Local Plan.

Members, while mindful of the rationale for timely adoption of the District's Local Plan, nevertheless concurred that there should be more detailed consideration of the Inspector's recommendations. Members therefore felt that there would be merit in tasking a Sub-Committee to do this within the next two months. On a Motion moved by Cllr M G B Starke and seconded by Cllr K J Gordon, it was:-

#### **Resolved**

That a task and finish Sub-Committee be set up in order to examine in detail the changes to the Local Plan recommended by the Local Plan Inquiry Inspector and to report back to this Committee within two months. (HPS)

### 440 LOCAL SERVICE AGREEMENT QUARTERLY UPDATE REPORT: JULY – SEPTEMBER 2005

The Committee considered the report of the Area Manager, County Highways updating Members on Highway Authority activities and Local Service Agreement (LSA) progress for the period from July to September 2005, as required in the agreement.

County officers confirmed, in response to a Member enquiry as to whether the Local Service Agreement (LSA) had yet been signed, that County Councillor Mr R Bass anticipated that all Authorities would sign the LSA later this month.

It was noted that maintenance work on Daws Heath Road – Roach Avenue to Eastwood Road would be postponed; this was due to Anglia Water's need to dig a large hole in the middle of the road in order to deal with a collapsed sewer.

In response to a Member concern relating to the poor condition of Plumberow Avenue, County officers advised that roads had been categorised red, amber or green according to maintenance need, and that some parts of Plumberow Avenue had been categorised as red, ie, requiring attention. In addition, some footway works were due to take place along Plumberow Avenue during this financial year.

It was noted, in response to a Member enquiry that County officers would

provide Members of the Committee with an update on drainage schemes within the District.

Responding to a Member query relating to the cycle path in Lower Road, Hullbridge, County officers confirmed that there were no funds forthcoming in order to extend the cycle path.

Members commended County officers for their work in gathering evidence of cars illegally performing right turns from Crown Hill into Love Lane. More than 150 instances were recorded during a 24-hour period.

In response to a Member enquiry relating to the Spa Road bus lay-by scheme, officers confirmed that, due to the restrictive width of the footway, it would not be possible for this to be replaced by a full bus-stop.

County officers noted the following Member concerns and confirmed that they would investigate them:-

- The Boulevard, Rochford required re-surfacing.
- Footpaths along the steep section of London Road, Rayleigh were such that it was very difficult for disabled buggies to negotiate them safely.
- Residents had paid to have work done at the entrance to Oak Road, Rochford to alleviate flooding, only for these works to be undone by recent re-surfacing work along Hall Road.
- Cars travelled fast along Star Lane, often cutting the corner and causing problems for those waiting to turn right into Poynters Lane – this problem could be alleviated by a traffic island.
- Condition of pavements in Little Wheatley Chase, Rayleigh
- It was difficult for disabled buggies to travel along the pavement in Louis Drive, Rayleigh.

### **Resolved**

That the contents of the report be noted. (County Highways)

#### **441 REPORT OF THE TAXI LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE**

The Committee noted that the Hackney Carriage Drivers' Association had been asked by the Taxi Licensing Sub-Committee to submit a revised fare proposal for consideration. This item of business was accordingly deferred to a future meeting of this Committee.

#### **442 DECRIMINALISED PARKING ENFORCEMENT – NEW TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS AND INVESTIGATION INTO RESIDENTS' PARKING**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing

Management updating Members on the new traffic regulation orders introduced since October 2004 and exploring whether there was a need within the District to introduce a residents' parking scheme.

During debate Members expressed concern that the car parking situation was likely to worsen within the District in future, as a result of planning permission being granted for new, flatted developments with parking allocations below minimum requirements, on the basis of proximity to public transport services. Members perceived that these were properties that were likely to need adequate parking facilities, as on-street car parking was not often available in such locations. Members expressed disappointment that it was not yet possible to introduce a residents' parking scheme.

Highways officers noted a Member suggestion that, with respect to the parade of shops in the London Road, Rayleigh, further consideration be given to transforming some of the green area there into additional car parking spaces. It was also noted that, given the lack of budget available for such a scheme, there could be merit in including this within the Planned Parish Visits programme.

Responding to a Member enquiry relating to the relaxation of overnight parking restrictions in Council car parks, officers confirmed that there was the possibility that this could lead to heavy vehicles attempting to park overnight. It would, however, be possible to conduct out of hours enforcement in the car parks to alleviate such problems.

In response to a Member enquiry relating to reviewing a residents' parking scheme biannually, officers advised that, given the low number of requests received for such a scheme during this current review, it would be reasonable for any future reviews to be demand-led.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the introduction of new Traffic Regulation Orders across the District be noted.
- (2) That a Residents' Parking Scheme not be introduced within the District at this time and that this be reviewed biannually, in consultation with Ward Members.
- (3) That the District of Rochford Off Street Parking Places Order be amended to admit overnight parking for cars. (HRHM)

**(Note:** Cllr C J Lumley wished it to be recorded that he had voted against recommendation (2)).

### 443 BUS SERVICE 4A – GREAT WAKERING AND FOULNESS ISLAND

It was noted that, since the drafting of this report, the County Council had agreed to fund a replacement bus service serving Foulness, Barling, Little Wakering, Great Wakering and Shoeburyness East Beach.

Responding to a Member concern relating to a discrepancy in the timetables for the service, where there appeared to be disparity between a number of times for the service, officers confirmed that this would be investigated with the aim of ensuring that accurate timetables were published.

In response to a Member enquiry relating to whether the County Council subsidy had been given to Arriva or Stephenson's, officers confirmed that they would obtain this information for Members.

It was further noted that officers would explore the possibility of issuing a press release publicising the reinstated service.

#### **Resolved**

That the County Council be encouraged to continue to fund the service.  
(HRHM)

### 444 EAST OF ENGLAND PLAN EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC – SUBMISSION OF A STATEMENT ON THAMES GATEWAY SOUTH ESSEX

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning Services seeking Members' views on Rochford's statement of evidence to the East of England Plan Examination in Public on the sub-regional section of the plan dealing with Thames Gateway South Essex.

During debate, Members made a series of suggested amendments to the statement in order to strengthen the wording. Members further concurred that there would be merit in officers consulting with the Leader of the Council on any minor changes to the statement prior to its submission.

Responding to a Member concern relating to the penultimate paragraph on page 13.6 of the statement, relating to a review of inner Green Belt boundaries in relation to fulfilling future housing needs, officers confirmed that they would include within the statement a comment on sustainability.

#### **Resolved**

- (1) That, subject to the following Member comments, the appended statement be submitted to the EIP Panel as this Council's views on Matter 8B:-

### **Vision and Strategy**

- Page 13.4: Third sentence of paragraph one should read:-  
...Rochford is NOT and should never be considered part of 'Greater Southend'.

### **Environmental Capacity**

- Page 13.5: Insert at the end of fourth sentence:-  
...both from sea and river.  
The final paragraph should include in brackets the specified length of the District's coastline and that of the Essex coastline.

### **Employment/Economy**

- Final sentence should read:-  
...The framework recognises the importance of surface access improvements.

### **Housing**

- Page 13.6: Penultimate paragraph should include comment on sustainability.

- (2) That the Head of Planning Services be authorised, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make minor changes to the statement prior to final submission to best reflect the Council's views on Matter 8B. (HPS)

## **445 CHRISTMAS REFUSE COLLECTION**

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) providing proposals for the timetabling of the refuse collection service during the Christmas and New Year period and asking Members to determine which option they wished to take place.

It was noted that Serviceteam had indicated that they were satisfied that there would be sufficient operatives available for refuse collections on 31 December. Members accordingly concurred that option (A) would allow collections to return to normal sooner than option (B).

In response to a Member enquiry relating to arrangements for green waste collection during the Christmas and New Year period, officers confirmed that they would obtain clarification from Green's and would advise Members accordingly.

On a Motion moved by Cllr Mrs R Brown and seconded by Cllr Mrs M J Webster, it was:-

### **Resolved**

That proposal (A) be approved for the timetable for refuse collection over the

Christmas and New Year period. (CD(F&ES))

### **446 PROPOSED DIVERSION OF FOOTPATHS 12 AND 13, HOCKLEY**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Legal Services asking Members to determine an application received from Hockley Parish Council to divert part of footpaths 12 and 13, Hockley.

In response to a Member enquiry relating to the associated costs, officers confirmed that costs would be borne by Hockley Parish Council.

#### **Resolved**

- (1) That the proposal to divert footpaths 12 and 13, as shown on the attached plan, be approved.
- (2) That the Head of Legal Services be authorised to take all necessary steps to secure the making and confirmation of a Public Path Diversion Order under the terms of Section 119 of the Highways Act 1980.  
(HLS)

### **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

#### **Resolved**

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining business on the grounds that exempt information as defined in paragraph 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 would be disclosed.

### **447 EXTENSION OF ROCHFORD CEMETERY**

The Committee considered the exempt report of the Head of Legal Services updating Members on the progress of land acquisition for the Rochford Cemetery extension.

In response to a Member enquiry relating to the cost per acre for the land, officers advised that land values were determined by the proposed use and development opportunity that was realisable, and were based on comparable values of land for cemetery use rather than the existing agricultural value of the land. The acquisition was in accordance with the guidance and assessment of the market valuation by the District Valuer.

During debate, Members concurred that there would be merit in exploring whether, within the available budget, the northern boundary of the land could be straightened, as requested by the landowner, to render a more regular and manageable field boundary.

**Resolved**

That the Head of Legal Services be authorised to complete the freehold purchase of the land identified on the attached plan for the cemetery extension, together with such additional area as may be achieved by a straightening of the northern boundary, at market value and such other terms and conditions as he considers appropriate, subject to this being achieved within budget. (HLS)

The meeting closed at 9.40 pm.

Chairman .....

Date .....