

West Area Committee – 12 March 2009

Minutes of the meeting of the **West Area Committee** held on **12 March 2009** when there were present:-

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

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

ALSO PRESENT

Cllr Mrs C Roe	- Rayleigh Town Council
Cllr A Matthews	- Rawreth Parish Council
C I A Prophet	- Essex Police
M Hathaway	- NHS South East Essex
R Parker	- NHS South East Essex

OFFICERS PRESENT

S Fowler	- Head of Information and Customer Services
S Scrutton	- Head of Planning and Transportation
S Worthington	- Committee Administrator

65 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 29 January 2009 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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

66 COMMUNITY FORUM

Questions raised during the Community Forum and the responses given are summarised in the appendix to the Minutes.

In light of high public interest in the Rochford Core Strategy, the Chairman extended this section of the meeting to allow residents the opportunity to ask further questions relating to this issue.

Mr Scrutton advised that there would be further meetings of the Local Development Framework Sub-Committee to consider all the representations to the Core Strategy received from residents, as well as statutory bodies. It was anticipated that a final submission version of the Core Strategy would go to Full Council in July for approval. There would be a further round of public consultation in September/October 2009, which would run for 6 weeks. All representations received during this time would be sent to the Secretary of State, together with the final submission document. A public inquiry would then follow.

In response to questions, the following responses were noted:-

- No potential development areas cited in the Core Strategy document were situated within a zone 3 flood area. All such locations were outside areas at risk of flooding. There were substantial parts of Rochford District that fell within the Environment Agency's zone 3 risk area, including part of Rawreth.
- The possible effect of any proposed new development on neighbouring zone 3 risk areas would be dealt with in consultation with the Environment Agency.
- Although there was an Environment Agency zone 3 risk area running through part of Rawreth, there was also a large area of land within Rawreth that did not fall within this zone 3 risk area.

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

67 SPOTLIGHT ISSUES

(1) Update on Crime and Disorder in Rawreth and Rayleigh

Chief Inspector Prophet provided a verbal update on crime and disorder within Rawreth and Rayleigh. A summary sheet of reported crime statistics for the West Area had been circulated to all those present.

There were 220 less crimes reported across the Rochford District compared to the previous year and Rochford District was the safest district in the south of the county, the second safest police force within the county and the fifth safest force in the country.

During January and February 2009 the biggest reported crime was that of criminal damage, with 76 out of 132 reported crimes relating to criminal damage. This had been a particular problem during half-term in London Road, Victoria Road, Bardfield Way and Little Wheatley Chase, with instances of damage to walls and damage to cars. The Police were still investigating these crimes and had introduced heightened patrols in that area. Many of the problems had occurred overnight.

Although there were less instances of cars being stolen, mainly due to improved technology, burglaries from homes was on the increase. The Police had introduced a special operation, Termite 5, where overt, night-time Police patrols were introduced in an attempt to crack down on such burglaries. It should, however, be noted that instances of dwelling burglaries across the Rochford District totalled less than 1 per day.

The Police enjoyed good engagement with the schools and had given the schools advice on drugs and alcohol misuse and participated in sessions at schools around knife crime.

In tandem with this a lot of positive work has been taking place within local pubs using an iron track machine that detects samples of drugs.

In response to concern raised about the high figures for criminal damage for Sweyne Park ward, CI Prophet advised that most of the criminal damage occurred overnight; experience has borne out that usually such overnight damage occurs as a result of alcohol or drug misuse. The Police have introduced an operation whereby additional officers have been drafted in from the wider district on Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings in that area.

Responding to a further Member concern relating to the need for more Police foot patrols in the vicinity of Langdon Road and Purleigh Road following instances of walls being damaged there and that Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) had not been seen regularly patrolling London Road, CI Prophet expressed disappointment; PCSO's should be patrolling this area regularly on Friday to Sunday between 8.00 pm and 2.00 am. He would ensure that this happened.

CI Prophet confirmed, in response to reports of alcohol being sold to youngsters from vans outside the Asda store off Rawreth Lane, that this would be investigated. It was further observed that Asda had applied for planning permission to construct a wall to enclose the store's existing service area; there could be merit in requesting them to consider re-siting a smoking shelter in this area.

Similarly, CI Prophet confirmed that he would follow up on the following incidents:-

- Elderly residents being pestered by youths in Lansdowne Drive.
- A flood light being set up and loud music played the previous evening at King George's playing field, by the skateboard park.
- Vehicles parking on the pavement at Marco's on Saturday evenings.

- A car continually parking in the first bus stop in Grove Road/Clarence Road, and making it difficult for buses to pull in to allow disabled children to embark.

In response to an enquiry relating to the possibility of introducing a speed indicator sign in Down Hall Road, in order to address the problem of speeding in this location, CI Prophet confirmed that he would speak to the Roads Policing Team in Rayleigh and ask them to increase their efforts in this area.

Officers confirmed that they would also raise this matter with County Highways officers to see whether a speed indicator sign could be placed in Down Hall Road. Responding to a further concern raised about damage to the t-junction signs in Down Hall Road, officers confirmed that this issue would also be raised with County Highways.

In response to issues raised about pot holes in Down Hall Road, officers advised that all pot holes should be reported directly to County Highways. Details of how to do this was also available on the County Council and Rochford District Council websites.

Responding to a question relating to Police response time to residents' calls, CI Prophet confirmed that non-emergency (non-999) calls would not be attended to by Police unless there was a Police officer in the vicinity at that time. For non-emergency calls, the Neighbourhood Police Officer mobile telephone should be called; the Duty Sergeant would ensure that someone responded as soon as possible; a response should be received within 24 hours.

CI Prophet confirmed, in response to an enquiry relating to Neighbourhood Action Panels (NAP's), that these were still in operation. The local NAP was aware of the problems in London Road with respect to damage to walls and schools liaison officers could also assist the Police.

Responding to an observation made by a resident relating to the misuse of alcohol and drugs in Sweyne Park, CI Prophet advised this would be investigated.

CI Prophet noted a resident's request for speed guns to be used in Rawreth Lane.

Officers confirmed that they would advise County Highways officers of comments made by residents relating to the new speed cameras on the A127; it was claimed that the new 50mph speed limit was causing cars to bunch together and clogging up the slip roads.

(2) Draft Strategic Plan for NHS South East Essex 2009-2014

Ray Parker, Assistant Director of Strategic Planning and Partnerships,

delivered a presentation on the Draft Strategic Plan for NHS South East Essex 2009/2014. The presentation covered:-

- An additional £66million being allocated in order to improve health, to build up the network of GP, primary care and community services and to improve the organisation of the NHS.
- The drive to involve patients and carers more in care.
- The aspiration to provide a wider range of health services, which are accessible for longer periods and more convenient for patients.
- The provision of care at an earlier stage with the aim of avoiding hospital stays.
- Easier access to mental health care and support.
- Better value: £33million from current spending to go into new services; less spent on outdated buildings, with more spent on care in modern facilities.
- The challenges over the next five years and associated mechanisms for public consultation.
- Ten future proposals, including:-
 - Schemes to stay healthy
 - New 'urgent care centres' for minor injuries and illnesses
 - Innovation in care to avoid hospital stays
 - Shift of spending from hospital to GP, primary care and community services
 - More community services for older people
 - More mental health services, linked to family health services
 - Network of new GP premises, some with x-rays, tests and specialist clinics
 - More NHS dentists
 - Bigger role for pharmacy
 - GP, community services and social care in local 'integrated care organisations'.

In response to a Member enquiry relating to a reference to a new primary care centre for Rayleigh/Hockley/Rochford on page 21 of the strategy, Mr Parker confirmed that the intention was not to move all GPs into one centre. The NHS planned to build up a network of buildings, some already existing, some new, with the aim of ensuring that patients living in urban areas would not have to

travel further than 1 mile to access GP services, and patients in rural areas no further than 3 miles. GPs currently in premises in need of modernisation could, however, be invited to move to a new primary care centre.

Responding to a Member observation that it was preferable for any new primary care centre to be close to public transport and close to a town centre, and that the area covered by Rayleigh, Hockley and Rochford was too large to be properly served by such a centre, Ms Hathaway confirmed that no site had yet been selected for a primary care centre; the NHS would first consider all feedback received to the consultation exercise. In response to a supplementary point raised that Rawreth would not be an ideal location for a new primary care centre serving the District, Ms Hathaway agreed that Rawreth was not preferable; the NHS would need to work closely with the District Council in future to try to identify a more suitable location.

Mr Parker advised, in response to concern expressed about problems of communication and administration between different service areas, that proposals within the strategy to better organise the NHS were anticipated to result in improvements in this area.

Responding to a question relating to services relating to the misuse of drugs and alcohol, Mr Parker stressed that the NHS could only work in this area with members of the Local Strategic Partnership. The Drug and Alcohol Reference Group was also looking at these issues.

In response to a Member enquiry relating to single sex wards, Mr Parker advised that there was work currently underway within the NHS on developing action plans for all NHS facilities to offer single sex wards in the future.

Mr Parker confirmed, in response to a further enquiry about quality of care for dementia sufferers, that the strategy contained proposals to enhance general services for dementia, for both young and old, together with support for carers.

68 WEST AREA UPDATE

The Committee received the West Area Update.

16/08 – Feasibility Study for a Pedestrian Crossing at the Top of Downhall Park Way, Near Rawreth Lane (Minute 131/08 and 269/08)

In response to a Member question relating to a traffic management plan for the Asda store, off Rawreth Lane, officers confirmed that a workplace travel plan was provided to the Planning Authority by Asda in November 2007. The plan would be discussed with County Highways officers and any associated issues would be discussed outside the meeting with Cllr C I Black.

Responding to a concern raised about lack of progress in providing a pedestrian crossing in this location, officers advised that they would raise the matter with County Highways officers and would report back to Cllr R A Oatham outside the meeting.

**24/08 – Positioning of 2 Victorian Street Lights at Battlesbridge Bridge
(Minute 269/08)**

It was noted that Rawreth Parish Council had received a letter of apology from Rettendon Parish Council with respect to the street lights. It was noted that County Highways would be asked to provide an update on the proposed traffic lights for the bridge.

The meeting closed at 9.25 pm.

Chairman

Date

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

Appendix

Mrs Dawson, Rayleigh

1. When the new parking restrictions come into force in Little Wheatley Case, are we having a visit from the traffic warden? People ignore the notices now. Yes, the District Council will ensure that the parking enforcement officers patrol that area.
2. Is there any way we could have 1 or 2 bins down Little Wheatley Chase? Since the extension to the mini market at the garage we are constantly picking up drinks tins, sandwich wrappers, chocolate papers and crisp packets out of our gardens. We have a litter sign but it's too high to be seen, let alone read. This request will be referred to the District Council's Recycling Team who will respond directly to Mrs Dawson.

Mr Dawson, Rayleigh

1. Can our Ward Councillors please prevail on County Highways to look again at the condition of Little Wheatley Chase roadway and foot paths and put in hand to patch up or repair the worst of the damage. Please do not blame the frost and snow – it was like it long before the cold spell. This issue will be referred to County Highways officers; it is possible that it might be included for consideration within the new localism budget.
2. There are repeated gas leaks between No. 31 and 39 Little Wheatley. The pipes are rotting. Any such gas leaks should be reported by residents to National Gas.

Mr and Mrs Casey, Rawreth

We have major problems with rubbish, etc left in and around an unused turning bay at the end of our road, including cars being burnt out – we would like it if this obsolete turning could be removed. Problems in this vicinity have improved; the issue will, however, be raised with County Highways officers with a view to exploring the possibility of blocking off the area.

Mr Stone, Rayleigh

1. What will be the timescale allocated for the public consultation to the final version of the Rochford Core The consultation on the final version of the Core Strategy is currently programmed for September/October

- Strategy document, bearing in mind that this falls during the time of the summer holidays? 2009; the consultation will run for 6 weeks.
2. Does the final date in October for individual submissions by the public on the Rochford Core Strategy to the Secretary of State apply, or is there a period after that date for this? The period for submission is 6 weeks.
3. Can a full explanation of the procedure for the public to respond/give their views on the Rochford Core Strategy be provided? Details of the arrangements for consultation can be found in the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement. The final consultation will enable anyone to submit their views on the Core Strategy. All representations will be sent to the Secretary of State with the Core Strategy document. Thereafter arrangements will be made for a public inquiry – anyone wishing to present their views to the inquiry inspector will have an opportunity to do so.
4. Following the strong response for ways to reduce road traffic congestion on the B1013, Rawreth Lane, London Road, Rayleigh and Ashingdon Road, plus the need to divert traffic away from the centres of Rayleigh, Hockley and Rochford, what considerations have been given to improving or diverting these routes to reduce the greater traffic congestion that will arise after the additional housing is built? We are not aware that any consideration has been given to diverting the roads mentioned. However, the draft Core Strategy sets out a list of infrastructure requirements including highway and traffic improvements required for each of the development locations set out in the plan. Furthermore, the transport chapter of the plan recognises and seeks to address through policies the importance of highway improvements and other transport improvements to mitigate the impact of a new development.
5. What consideration has been given to the suggestion to extend Cherry Orchard Way northwards to Ashingdon Road, north of Ashingdon? None to our knowledge. To link to Ashingdon Road as suggested it would be necessary to cross the railway line.
6. What effect will the suggestion to dual carriageway Cherry Orchard Way for the airport expansion have on the existing major roads through the district? The proposed improvement to Cherry Orchard Way is to ensure there is sufficient capacity to deal with the proposed expansion of the industrial area. An analysis of the traffic implications arising from the Joint Area

Action Plan will be published in due course as part of the evidence base.

Mr Plummer, Rawreth

1. Why is a Tory controlled Council pushing an undesirable Labour housing plan that their own party has already announced it does not agree with and will drop when in office?
There is a legal requirement for Rochford to prepare a Local Development Framework suite of planning policy documents that deliver the housing and employment land requirements set out in the adopted East of England Plan.
2. Flooding is already a problem in the Church Road, Rawreth area. We have been seriously flooded twice in the last 8 years and the water levels have been dangerously high on many other occasions. The 'preferred site' between Rawreth Lane and the London Road slopes down to the Rawreth Brook. What are the proposals for ensuring that we are not further endangered by flooding Rawreth Lane and the London Road are already congested. More housing will make it worse. What are the proposals for this?
Flooding is recognised in the draft Rochford Core Strategy as an extremely important issue and policies ENV3 and ENV4 seek to address the concerns expressed in the question, particularly the importance of controlling run off from new development to prevent the risk of flooding.

Mr Abbey, Rawreth

The 'preferred site' between Rawreth Lane and London Road slopes down to Rawreth Brook. What are the proposals for ensuring that we are not further endangered by flooding? Are any risk calculations available for viewing?
As per above response.

Mr Plummer, Rawreth

1. Are we in zone 3? If so, why are you proposing to build and have more water discharged into the river if we are not in zone 3, why, as we have been flooded 4 times?
The following 9 questions are all of a technical nature. Policies ENV3 and ENV4 provide answers. Reference is made to Planning Policy Statement 25 and the Environment Agency consulted on all planning applications received. A more detailed response will be provided to Mr Plummer outside the meeting.

2. Under PPS25 do you have calculations of water that is discharged into the river that runs out at Battlesbridge?
3. Do you expect flooding as a result of this?
4. Have you calculations of water that can run out at Battlesbridge without causing flooding?
5. Should all new properties be risk assessed for flooding?
6. Have you risk assessments for water discharged into rivers because of development?
7. The Environment Agency expects 1% flooding. Do you expect more flooding as a result of this?
8. As these rivers are tidal, do you know how high these rivers get?
9. Every 100 years we are told to expect high tides but the Environment Agency says it could be every 20 years. If we had a 6.5m tide, what would be safe calculations for water to discharge out of Battlesbridge lock?

Mr Buckle, Rayleigh

What feedback is there on the consultation response to Rochford Core Strategy Preferred Options?

The consultation responses were discussed at a meeting of the Local Development Framework Sub-Committee on 9 February 2009, the Minutes of which are publicly available. All representations received are available for the public to view on the Council's website.

Ms Tedder, Rayleigh

Proposed 1000+ homes to be built on farmland adjoining Makro and Rawreth Industrial Estate – what sort of homes are to be built? My concerns would be that it would de-value my property, increase traffic to the Makro road, which in turn would increase noise and pollution to my property.

A development location north of London Road is shown in the Core Strategy with a quantum of 650 houses. In addition, the re-development of Rawreth Industrial Estate with 200 homes is proposed.

Policies H3 and H4 in the Rochford Core Strategy identify the requirements for affordable housing on new development sites and that a mix of dwelling types to cater for all needs of the community must be provided. There is an identified demand locally for three bedroom properties.