

East Area Committee – 6 November 2008

Minutes of the meeting of the **East Area Committee** held on **6 November 2008** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr T E Goodwin
Vice-Chairman: Cllr K J Gordon

Cllr T G Cutmore	Cllr M J Steptoe
Cllr Mrs G A Lucas-Gill	Cllr Mrs B J Wilkins
Cllr C G Seagers	

ALSO PRESENT

Cllr K H Hudson	-	Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation
Cllr Mrs P Shaw	-	Ashingdon Parish Council
Cllr V Newby	-	Canewdon Parish Council
D Whittingham	-	Paglesham Parish Council
Cllr Mrs M S Vince	-	Rochford Parish Council
Cllr D Tullett	-	Stambridge Parish Council

OFFICERS PRESENT

J Bourne	-	Head of Community Services
S Scrutton	-	Head of Planning and Transportation
S Hollingworth	-	Team Leader (Planning Policy)
V Wong	-	Assistant Planner
M Power	-	Committee Administrator

317 AREA COMMITTEE – INITIAL BUSINESS

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from District Cllrs Mrs T J Capon and J P Cottis, Cllrs P A Capon (Stambridge Parish Council), Mrs I Knight (Barling Magna Parish Council) and B Summerfield (Sutton Parish Council).

Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2008 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

318 COMMUNITY FORUM

Requests for information had been received in advance of the meeting and a document summarising these, together with further questions received, is appended.

319 SPOTLIGHT ISSUES

Cllr Keith Hudson, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation gave a presentation on the Rochford Core Strategy. He explained that the aim of the

Core Strategy was to provide more housing, jobs, leisure opportunities and better health facilities while creating a vibrant, inclusive, safe, sustainable and modern environment, and retaining Rochford's essential characteristics, including the salt marshes, rivers, woodland, open countryside, villages and market towns. In order to complement the listed building and conservation area legislation and retain and support the District's heritage it was proposed that the 'Local List' be reinstated.

The focus of the Core Strategy was also on developing higher levels of employment and realising the full potential of London Southend Airport in terms of economic growth.

The Core Strategy Preferred Options document detailed the legal requirement for the provision of new housing within the District. The East of England Plan originally required Rochford District to build 4600 new homes between 2001 and 2021; the requirement now is that the plan be extended to 2025, which leaves 4790 homes still to build, equating to approximately 250 new homes every year in Rochford District. The Rochford Urban Capacity Study shows that 1301 new homes can be built without encroaching on the Green Belt, leaving 3489 to locate by 2025. Both Rochford District Council's independent housing needs study of 2004 and the recent Thames Gateway South Essex Strategic Housing Market Assessment's Final Report, September 2008 agree that the District will have a future requirement for this level of additional housing.

It was noted that the need for new additional housing was driven primarily by two factors; an aging population (which reduced the availability of the existing stock of homes) and the need for further homes due to the breakup of families.

In order to comply with legal duties and to meet the housing need of the District the Council will release Green Belt land very sparingly after having allocated all 'brownfield' sites. The burden of release of Green Belt land will be shared by the District as a whole and not concentrated in any one particular area. There will be opposition to the building of houses in back gardens and the intensification of housing densities within existing neighbourhoods, including the proliferation of blocks of flats in roads of single family homes.

The proposed locations of the new housing that is currently recommended to be built between 2015 and 2021 can be found in the Core Strategy document; 35% of the proposed new housing will be affordable housing. A 'site allocations' document will be produced following the expiration of the consultation period of the Core Strategy.

It was appreciated that the provision of new homes and new businesses would necessitate consideration of the effect on existing infrastructure and proposals for infrastructure improvements. It was imperative that the new homes be built in a way that protects the environment and provides the infrastructure to support local communities.

The Council is now asking its residents, partners, stakeholders and businesses and for their views regarding the proposals in the Core Strategy including their preferred options for the allocation of housing. These views should be submitted to the Planning Department at Rochford District Council via the online consultation system. It was emphasised that every individual communication that the Council receives will be carefully considered. This information would form part of the Council's evidence base. A site allocation document would then be produced and infrastructure plans would be determined.

Matters were raised during discussion, as follows:-

- Concern was expressed that the proposed new homes to be built in Ashingdon, Rochford and Hawkwell would have an adverse impact on the level of traffic in Ashingdon Road, Rectory Road and Main Road, Hawkwell. A question was also raised regarding the siting of a new primary school to the east of Rochford, when the majority of new houses would be built to the west of Rochford. It was advised that additional infrastructure was a key component of the Core Strategy. Opportunities to enhance the road network would also be explored as part of the London Southend Airport project, which would take traffic south, rather than to the east. A policy was included in the Core Strategy, but the details would be included in an Area Action Plan now in preparation.
- In response to concern that the increase in housing in the east of Hockley would impact on traffic along the Hockley Road during rush hour, it was advised that new infrastructure would be provided but that details could not be confirmed until sites for housing were allocated. However, a list of infrastructure had been identified in the Core Strategy Preferred Options document and the public's views were sought on this subject.
- It was confirmed that even if the extension to the runway at the airport did not go ahead, there would still be a significant increase in the number of passengers using the airport and a corresponding enhancement/increase of infrastructure provision. It was added that the granting of an extended runway should result in the possibility of a smaller number of larger/quieter jets being used. The expansion of the Airport would be accompanied by a corresponding increase in infrastructure.
- Regarding concern about the proposal to release Green Belt for the building of new homes, it was stressed that the Council had no option but to provide these new homes by 2025. It had been identified that the requirement to build this number of new homes was both reasonable in terms of the District future requirements, and sustainable. Any further requirements to continue building at this rate after 2025 would be opposed by the Council.
- It was asked why a new health centre had been proposed for Rayleigh, which had a good GP/patient ratio but no recommendation on improved healthcare facilities within the Core Strategy had been made for Hockley

and Rochford, in which areas a higher number of houses were proposed to be built and which had a lower GP and dentist/patient ratio than Rayleigh. It was noted that Essex County Council and South East Essex PCT were required to provide health and education facilities and Preferred Option CLT4 of the Core Strategy states that new developments must be accompanied by a health impact assessment. South East Essex PCT had assessed requirements for health care in the District and this was reflected in the Core Strategy document. The District Council would assist in identifying sites for health care facilities.

- It was confirmed that, as part of the provision for new homes, adequate infrastructure would be implemented from a variety of sources. The Council's partners and stakeholders would provide funding for infrastructure and appropriate infrastructure would be a condition of any planning permission granted to developers. Preferred Option CLT1 of the Core Strategy details that a standard charge per dwelling will be made to deliver infrastructure. Funding for infrastructure would also be received as part of the London Southend Airport scheme.
- Because site allocations for new housing had not yet been decided, infrastructure costs could not be calculated at present and therefore had not been included in the Core Strategy Preferred Options document.
- A Section 106 agreement could include a requirement that the developer contributes to infrastructure, which had to be directly related to the schemes being undertaken.
- In response to a suggestion that a number of parishes would appreciate the inclusion of additional allotment sites within the District, CLT5 of the Core Strategy Preferred Options document stated that there was an opportunity to provide additional allotment facilities, which would be integrated within new housing developments.
- Regarding the plans for the expansion of Southend Airport, it was confirmed that the imposition of conditions relating to noise mitigation may be placed on any future planning approvals granted by Rochford District Council. The issue was being thoroughly examined through the London Southend Airport and Environs Area Action Plan Forum. Consent has already been granted for a new terminal building and railway station and although an increase in passenger transport would be seen, there was very little freight going through the airport, which was regarded largely as a facility for aircraft maintenance.
- In response to concerns regarding building on areas susceptible to flooding, it was confirmed that no building would take place in any area that was below sea level. There was also concern that with the proposed number of new dwellings the District sewage works would be overloaded. Whilst it was recognised that there was a challenge to be faced regarding drainage development sites the Core Strategy Preferred Options

recognised that sustainable drainage systems were a fundamental element of the development process. It was confirmed that the Environment Agency had a key role to play in respect of the new developments.

- Regarding the cost of drainage it was confirmed that ditches by roads were subject to clearance by the riparian land owner and only the Highways Authority had the power to issue instructions in this regard.
- Rochford District Matters would be delivered to all households in the District and would include a summary of the key elements of the proposals included in the Core Strategy Preferred Options and detail information about how to respond to the consultation, preferably through the online consultation system.

320 EAST AREA UPDATE

The Committee received the East Area update.

Obstruction of the Public Footpath through the Boatyard, Paglesham (11/07)

A further update would be provided by Essex County Council at the next meeting.

New Skateboard Ramps in Canewdon Park (39/08)

The request from young residents was for permission from the Council to expand the ramp provision in the park if they were able to obtain the funding. It was advised that the Leisure and Development team or Head of Community Services should be contacted to discuss the matter further.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm.

Chairman

Date

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

Appendix

Question

A Ley, Rochford

Would it not be possible to re-jig PCSO/Police Officer shift patterns to facilitate a visible Police presence on Friday and Saturday evenings and a local Police point of contact at these times?

M Pallen, Great Waking

Earlier this year I wrote to the relevant departments, Road Safety at Essex County Council (copied to Essex Police) to ask about having the white lines at the edge of the Southend Road, Great Waking repainted as we get a lot of fog/mist along here (due to the farmland) and also we have ditches at the roadsides. Although they replied that they would look into it, nothing came of it. I also suggested the installation of reflecting road studs. They said that consideration would be given to this suggestion, although these are usually reserved for heavily trafficked routes. Nothing materialised with this either. Our road is a very busy road, with lorries to Marley's, Farm, traffic and skips to the tip, plus it is the main thoroughfare between Southend and Great Waking. A week or so ago the centre line was repainted; I would actually have preferred the sides doing.

A Bunn, Great Waking

What happened to the Great Waking meeting in December?

Response

The Police do this as much as possible. The Police resources employed on a Friday and Saturday are focussed on the busiest hours, i.e. 1500 to midnight.

Where needed, additional resources are also rostered to work targeting any crime/anti-social behaviour hotspots.

An order for edge of carriageway markings has been made and will the work will be carried out in due course. The introduction of studs will depend on whether they will be of benefit to the highway user at night and the frequency of night time accidents will be taken into consideration. An investigation will need to be carried out before a decision can be made. Whatever the outcome it is unlikely that this will be funded this financial year.