

Planning Policy & Transportation Committee – 11 July 2006

Minutes of the meeting of the **Planning Policy & Transportation Committee** held on **11 July 2006** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr P A Capon
Vice-Chairman: Cllr C A Hungate

Cllr C I Black
Cllr T G Cutmore
Cllr A J Humphries
Cllr D Merrick

Cllr J M Pullen
Cllr P R Robinson
Cllr Mrs M J Webster

VISITING MEMBER

Cllr J M Pullen

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J P Cottis, C A Hungate and J R F Mason.

OFFICERS PRESENT

S Scrutton	-	Head of Planning & Transportation
P Grimwood	-	Essex County Council Highways
L Harvey	-	Essex County Council Highways
J Bostock	-	Principal Committee Administrator

222 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs A J Humphries, C J Lumley, J R F Mason and J M Pullen each declared a personal interest in the item relating to changes to Websters Way Car Park, Rayleigh by virtue of being Rayleigh Town Councillors.

223 PROGRESS ON DECISIONS

The Committee reviewed the Progress on Decisions Schedule.

(1) Car Parks Customer Survey – Results (Minute 293/04)

It was noted that a report on the Car Park Customer Survey would be submitted to the October meeting of the Committee. The coding of results for this type of survey was a lengthy process.

(2) Quys Lane, Rochford (Minute 273/05)

The connection of lighting to the electrical supply by EDF was still awaited.

(3) Decriminalised Parking Enforcement – New Traffic Regulation Orders and Investigation into Residents' Parking (Minute 442/05)

As yet, officers were not aware of any High Court challenge associated with The Off-Street Parking Places Order.

(4) Extension of Rochford Cemetery (Minute 447/05)

The precise completion date associated with cemetery extension would be checked. (HP&T)

224 HIGHWAYS LOCAL SERVICE AGREEMENT UPDATE REPORT: APRIL-JUNE 2006

The Committee considered the report of the Area Manager, Highways & Transportation Services, on highway authority activities and local service agreement progress for the period from April to June 2006.

In presenting the report, County officers advised that:-

- Footway maintenance work in Plumberow Avenue, Hockley had been completed and work at Grove Road was imminent. Rochford schemes would comprise York Road, Alexandra Road and Stanley Road.
- The maintenance initiative would now include surface treatment at Plumberow Avenue, Hockley, surface dressing at Barrow Hall Road, Barling and additional surface dressing and resurfacing work at Stambridge Road, Rochford.
- Continuation of the short cycle/bridleway section north of Moat Farm linking to Church Road at Bedloes Corner, Rawreth was imminent.
- Continuation of last year's A1245 footway widening link north-east of Bedloes Corner, Rawreth was completed. There may be some additional minor works.
- Further to a recent item in the Members' Bulletin, County officers would welcome comments with regard to improvements to the Ashingdon Road junction with Brays Lane, Ashingdon.

During debate, reference was made to the speed of vehicles (often heavy goods vehicles) at the location of the Ashingdon Road junction with Brays Lane, Ashingdon. County officers advised that a few different designs had been analysed and that detail could be provided on why a mini-roundabout would have been inappropriate at this location.

Responding to questions, County officers also advised that:-

- The Greensward Lane, Hockley reserve scheme is a scheme to resurface Greensward Lane itself from the bottom of Plumberow Avenue to the bridge at the railway station.
- Subject to funding, gulleys are cleared twice per year.
- Contact on street lighting matters can either be direct to the street lighting contractor (now T Cartledge) or to the Highways Area Office (a South Area Street Lighting engineer had now been appointed).
- Heavy goods vehicles should not be going over 40 miles per hour where there are restrictions in Apton Hall Road, Canewdon. Essex Police are about to undertake enforcement activity for the 30 miles per hour zone.

Some concern was expressed at the speeding of heavy goods vehicles after the end of the 40 miles per hour zone in Apton Hall Road.

The Committee agreed a motion, moved by Councillor T G Cutmore and seconded by Councillor C I Black, on the introduction of a mechanism for commenting on any objections to proposed traffic regulation orders. It was noted that objections did not arise very often.

Resolved

- (1) That, subject to the Highways & Transportation Service providing detail on why a mini-roundabout would be inappropriate at the Ashingdon Road junction with Brays Lane, Ashingdon, the contents of the Local Service Agreement update report (April to June 2006) be noted.
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Head of Planning & Transportation, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee and appropriate local Ward Members, to comment on any objections to proposed Traffic Regulation Orders. (AM,H&TS/HP&T)

225 LATEST REVIEW OF LOCALLY DETERMINED PROGRAMME 2005/06 AND PRESENTATION OF LOCALLY DETERMINED PROGRAMME 2006/07

The Committee considered the report of the Area Manager, Transportation and Operational Services on progress on the Locally Determined Programme 2005/06 and approval of the Locally Determined Programme for 2006/07.

In presenting the report, County officers advised that the figures associated with the locally determined budget were subject to overall budgetary confirmation by the County Cabinet Member.

During discussion, a Member observed that it would be useful if the format of the Locally Determined Programme Schedule provided more detail on time-tabling/location aspects.

Responding to questions, County Officers advised that:-

- Whilst vehicle activated message signs were fixed to posts, they could be moved around every couple of weeks. Data can be collected from the apparatus to indicate if the signs are being deliberately activated by the behaviour of drivers.
- Pedestrian crossing prioritisation is associated with usage.
- Sustrans (the National cycling group) aimed to connect cycling routes wherever possible.
- The cost of advertising associated with Traffic Regulation Orders, signing and lining and speed limit requests can be significant and needs to be taken into account when developing proposals.

The Committee concurred with the observation of the local Ward Member that there would be merit in giving some higher priority to the East Cheap, Rayleigh and Cheapside East, Rayleigh locations. These were very close to the most-used railway station in the District, a station that was only second to Shenfield in terms of the number of season tickets issued to users of the line. On some days cars could be parked for 12 hours, and there had been an occasion when a waste collection vehicle could not gain access. Surveying undertaken by a local Residents Association highlighted that there are problems.

The Committee agreed that, under the circumstances, it would be appropriate to replace alteration to existing waiting restrictions at Spa Road, Hockley with the extension of 'No Waiting at Any Time' at East Cheap, Rayleigh and extension of the waiting restrictions at Cheapside East, Rayleigh.

Resolved

- (1) That, subject to the extension of 'No waiting at any time' at East Cheap, Rayleigh and extension of the waiting restrictions at Cheapside East, Rayleigh replacing alteration to existing waiting restrictions at Spa Road, Hockley as items to be progressed this year if possible, the programme of locally determined schemes set out at Section 4 of the report be approved.
- (2) That the rolling programme of reserve schemes set out at Section 5 of the report be approved. (AM,H&TS)

226 ROCHFORD CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

Note: Cllrs C J Lumley and Mrs M J Webster each declared a personal interest in this item by virtue of being members of the Rayleigh Mount Local Committee.

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning & Transportation on the second Conservation Area appraisal prepared for Rochford.

During discussion it was agreed that it would be appropriate for Conservation Area papers to be identified as draft documents pending Member endorsement. It was also agreed that there would be merit in future documents including an executive summary and for there to be a facility whereby Members who may wish to comment on the documents are able to do so prior to their release for public consultation. Where proposed changes on documents are reported back to Members, it would be useful for them to be in a format that facilitates the easy identification of proposed changes.

On a motion, moved by Councillor T G Cutmore and seconded by Councillor C I Black, it was:-

Resolved

- (1) That, subject to the document being identified as a 'draft', the Rochford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan be approved for consultation.
- (2) That the results of the consultation be reported back in December 2006 in a format that facilitates the easy identification of proposed changes.
- (3) That the remaining eight conservation area appraisal papers be clearly identified as 'draft' documents and include an executive summary. A facility to be made available for all Members who may wish to comment on the documents to be able to do so prior to their release for public consultation. (HP&T)

227 GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS – POLICY UPDATE

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning & Transportation on the national planning policy context for gypsies and travellers, together with work being carried out by the East of England Regional Assembly and Thames Gateway South Essex and the possible implications for Rochford District.

In presenting the report, the Head of Planning & Transportation advised of a recent communication indicating that a formal request would be issued to districts by the East of England Regional Assembly seeking information and advice on pitch provision. The following questions would be asked:-

- What are the levels of existing provision of pitches in your authority area?
- What is the perception of unmet need in your authority?
- What is the assessment of net additional pitch requirements to meet that need?

- What is the geographical distribution of that provision across the district?

Responding to questions, the Head of Planning & Transportation advised that:-

- If the Council was to commission its own gypsy and traveller accommodation assessment this is likely to cost between £15-£20,000.
- There are distinct categories of site. For example, short-term stopping places (STSPs) that may be used for one to two weeks every year, sites owned by District and County Councils, where there is longer term habitation, and privately owned sites.
- Whilst there would be a need to obtain detailed legal advice, it would be possible to submit a report to Full Council on action that could be taken with regard to the seven unauthorised sites in the District listed in the appendix to the report.
- Work on this area is part of a statutory process that includes the involvement of the East of England Regional Assembly in the preparation of the East of England Plan. The final decision on the contents of the East of England Plan rests with the Secretary of State.

The Committee felt that it would be appropriate for the Council to commission its own gypsy and traveller accommodation assessment and agreed a motion, moved by Councillor T G Cutmore and seconded by Councillor C I Black, in this regard. The Committee also agreed that it would be appropriate to consider bringing to a close the problem of the seven unauthorised caravan sites in the District, particularly the site at Oakwood, Trenders Avenue, Rayleigh, and requested further information on what might be done.

A Member referred to a recent observation of a Government Planning Inspector on the reduced ability of the Rochford District to provide sites due to Green Belt considerations.

Resolved

- (1) That the Council commissions its own Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, to be funded from balances.
- (2) That a report be submitted to Full Council on action that could be taken with regard to the seven unauthorised caravan sites in the District, particularly the site at Oakwood, Trenders Avenue, Rayleigh. (HP&T)

228 CHANGES TO WEBSTERS WAY CAR PARK, RAYLEIGH

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning & Transportation on a request from Rayleigh Town Council for changes to Websters Way car park, Rayleigh to enable the relocation of a gate close to the sports pavilion.

In endorsing the proposals it was observed that there were no parent/child parking spaces at the car park.

Resolved

- (1) That Rayleigh Town Council be advised that the changes proposed to Websters Way Car Park are acceptable, subject to there being no cost to the Council and the detailed design being submitted for approval and arrangements for implementation, including health and safety considerations, being agreed.
- (2) That Rayleigh Town Council be authorised to arrange for its contractor to undertake works in Websters Way Car Park, as specified in the report.
- (3) That it be noted that there are no parent/child parking spaces at the car park. (HP&T)

The meeting closed at 9.06 pm.

Chairman

Date