

West Area Committee – 4 September 2007

Minutes of the meeting of the **West Area Committee** held on **4 September 2007** when there were present:-

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

Cllr Mrs P Aves
Cllr C I Black
Cllr Mrs J Dillnutt
Cllr K A Gibbs
Cllr J E Grey
Cllr A J Humphries
Cllr T Livings

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

OFFICERS PRESENT

S Fowler - Head of Information and Customer Services
S Scrutton - Head of Planning and Transportation
J Bourne - Head of Community Services
D Byrne - Waste Management Officer
M Power - Committee Administrator
S Worthington - Committee Administrator

ALSO PRESENT

Cllr A Matthews - Rawreth Parish Council
Cllr Miss C Rowe - Rayleigh Town Council
Insp A Parkman - Essex Police

283 CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the emergency evacuation procedures.

284 AREA COMMITTEE – INITIAL BUSINESS

Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Cllr Miss P Weaver.

Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 July 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment:-

Minute 238 – Number 35 Bus Service

Replace “Watery Lane” with “Rawreth Lane” in the penultimate line.

285 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 written questions received at the meeting, with responses, are appended to the Minutes.

The Chairman stated that the Government had decreed that 3,800 houses had to be built within the Rochford District, taking account of completions from 2001. The Council had no choice in this matter. The only discretion the Council had was to determine where these houses would be built. Council officers had made a number of proposals, on which the public had been consulted. Comments received from the public would form the next stage of the process. Conservative Group Members would be asking Council to consider an amendment proposing that, of the 3,800 houses to be built in the Rochford District up until 2021, 740 would be built in Rayleigh. This proposal was subject to discussion and agreement by the Council.

286 SPOTLIGHT ISSUES

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

Inspector Parkman provided a summary sheet of reported crime statistics for the West Area, which was circulated to all those present. It was noted that reported offences had fallen from 63 in August 2006 to 42 in August 2007.

It was further noted that although the reported number of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) incidents had increased from 74 in July 2007 to 80 in August 2007, the area that generally most affected people, that of rowdy/nuisance behaviour, had seen a reduction. The overall number of reported ASB's in the area covered by the West Area Committee had fallen from 106 in August 2006 to 80 in 2007.

In response to questions, Insp. Parkman provided the following information:-

- The Trender Avenue 'rave', which had been prevented, was sub judicial, thus no details could be disclosed. It could, however, be confirmed that two people had been charged with offences. A member of the public expressed thanks to the police for their presence at the event and the support given to residents. Inspector Parkman praised Rochford District Council officers for their part in resolving the situation.
- PC Nuth had indicated that he would be willing to go out and about with a speed gun, as required. Details of his mobile number were available via the Council website.
- All 999 calls to Essex Police and Rayleigh police station (via the service desk), were tape-recorded. Some calls to the police, however,

did not require a police officer to attend, but resulted in advice being given out over the telephone. Essex Police operated a graded response system, which was dependent on the nature of the call, and received approximately 80,000 calls per month.

- Any data that was available following a survey of vehicles travelling along Rawreth Lane, since the speed limit had been reduced from 40mph to 30mph, would be reported to the next meeting.

Inspector Parkman confirmed, in response to concerns relating to speeding vehicles, that he would investigate with the Essex Camera Safety Partnership whether traffic surveys could be conducted in the vicinity of Hambro Hill/Downhall Road and in the vicinity of Wheatley Close/Purleigh Way/Bardfield Way.

It was emphasised that, although there was no legal standing or protection for members of the public volunteering for the Community Speed Watch scheme, those volunteering in Rayleigh would be asked to operate cameras throughout the town, and would not necessarily cover their own roads. The scheme was primarily intended to be educational and informative, rather than an enforcement service.

(2) Sweyne Park Extension Update

Members considered the report of the Head of Community Services on the progress being made on the Sweyne Park extension, with regard to the creation of new junior football pitches on the land adjoining Sweyne Park to the rear of Rayleigh Leisure Centre.

Some concern was expressed that £50,000 had been set aside in the budget for general improvements to Sweyne Park, but it appeared as though funds were being used solely for this particular project. Officers advised that costs were still being obtained for the works, but initial quotations from contractors were cheaper than anticipated. Other sources of external funding were also being explored. A report would be made to the Executive Board on 17 October for decisions to be taken with respect to future use and management of the pitches.

It was anticipated that, subject to weather conditions, completion of the project would take place by September 2009, by which time the pitches would be properly drained and changing facilities for both sexes would be completed.

It was noted that the bridle path, which was the subject of an agreement between Wimpey and Essex County Council, had not been completed by the end of the school summer holiday. An update on the exact timetable for this would be reported to the next meeting.

It was emphasised that, although fencing around the site would be

erected, the area would not be completely fenced off, due to its size. However, if the condition of the pitches deteriorated due to improper use, the situation would be reviewed.

Public concern was expressed regarding the lack of facilities and public transport in the Sweyne Park area and the fact that access to the football pitches would be via Rawreth Lane. In addition to the problem of congestion, the increased use of Rawreth Lane by lorries travelling to and from ASDA, and dangerous driving due to the increased traffic, presented an issue of safety to residents of the area.

An update would be provided to the next meeting on the planting of large areas of the field by Bedloes Corner, further reducing the number of football pitches available.

(3) Environmental Campaign – Update

It was noted that Rochford District Council's environmental campaign, launched in September 2005, had involved Councillors, local residents and local volunteer groups. The campaign had tackled hot spots around the district for dog fouling, graffiti, fly-tipping and litter dropping. During the first phase of the campaign much had been done in terms of publicity, with leaflets delivered and promotion in Rochford District Matters. In addition, identified hot spots were monitored.

The second phase of the campaign had sought to comply with the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. Volunteers had taken an active part in the work. 1146 tasks were completed during the course of the campaign in the period from September 2005 to June 2007. 853 sites (excluding those with graffiti) had been tackled around the district. Graffiti had been removed from 467 sites. Pavements had been washed, waste had been removed and 54 signs had been placed around the District publicising the monitoring of hot spots. 62 untaxed cars had been towed away, with 26 subsequently scrapped and the remaining 36 resulting in fines paid by their owners. 42% of tasks completed during the campaign had been carried out in the West Area of the Rochford District.

6 of the 12 Essex County Council schools in the West area had expressed an interest in taking part in the District Council's schools recycling collection service. The next phase would include private schools.

The next big clean up would take place in October and residents were encouraged to contact the Waste Team with details of any hot spots.

In response to questions, the following was noted:-

- The contractor was scheduled to clear rubbish at the corner of Queens Road/Eastwood Road next week.

- An update would be provided at the next meeting on requests for additional dog bins in the alleyway behind Langham Road, Rayleigh.
- Essex County Council would be alerted to the presence of ragwort along the A1245 within the Rochford boundary.
- Some shop frontages along Rayleigh High Street were privately owned; it was thus the responsibility of the shop owners to keep those areas clean. The Council had, however, cleaned many of these areas, as part of the environmental campaign.
- The County Council would be informed that a large road sign was completely obscured by trees on the A1245 between the Carpenters Arms roundabout and the A127, just before the railway bridge.

(4) Polling Districts and Polling Places Review

Members considered the report of the Head of Information & Customer Services on the review by Rochford District Council of polling districts and polling places within the District as required by the Electoral Administration Act 2006. The only change proposed in the report was the merging of polling districts RDG and RDG2 in Rayleigh Central ward. This was an administrative change only and would not affect voters.

The meeting commended these proposals.

287 WEST AREA UPDATE

Christmas Lights in Rayleigh (03/07)

The traffic order was made on 3 September 2007 for road closures in Crown Hill/Church Street from 3.00 pm to 7.30 pm on 29 November 2007.

Display Cabinets – Rayleigh Windmill (08/07)

Cabinets would be provided for the museum floor and would be installed in December 2007.

Battlesbridge Conservation Area (09/07)

Rochford District Council and Chelmsford Borough Council had agreed to explore the possibility of establishing a joint forum for issues relating to the Conservation Area. Officers were currently being identified to work in this area and progress would be reported back to this meeting.

Additional Air Quality Monitoring (10/07)

An update would be provided at the next meeting on air quality monitoring conducted from properties in close proximity to Rawreth Industrial Estate.

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In response to an enquiry relating to unauthorised travellers' sites, it was noted that an update on the unauthorised travellers' site on the A1245 would be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm.

Chairman

Date

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