

East Area Committee – 8 October 2008

Minutes of the meeting of the **East Area Committee** held on **8 October 2008** when there were present:-

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

Cllr Mrs T J Capon
Cllr J P Cottis
Cllr T G Cutmore

Cllr Mrs G A Lucas-Gill
Cllr Mrs B J Wilkins

ALSO PRESENT

Cllr Mrs P Shaw	-	Ashingdon Parish Council
Cllr P A Capon	-	Stambridge Parish Council
Cllr V Newby	-	Canewdon Parish Council
A Prophet	-	Essex Police

VISITING MEMBER

Cllr M G B Starke

OFFICERS PRESENT

J Bourne	-	Head of Community Services
R Evans	-	Head of Environmental Services
P McKenna	-	Woodlands & Environmental Officer
M Power	-	Committee Administrator

285 AREA COMMITTEE – INITIAL BUSINESS

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs C G Seagers, M J Steptoe and Mrs M S Vince (Rochford Parish Council).

Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2008 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

286 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.

It was noted that the response given by the Chairman (who is also Chairman of Great Wakering Parish Council) to the question received at the East Area Committee meeting on 4 September 2008 requesting that the Great Wakering

Parish Council be asked to include questions and answers from the public in their council minutes was that: 'there is no legal obligation for us to do so and we won't'.

Requests for information had been received and a document summarising these and the responses given at the meeting is appended.

287 SPOTLIGHT ISSUES

(1) Update on Crime and Disorder in the East Area

Figures relating to reported crimes and anti-social behaviour (ASB) for the east area of the District had been circulated at the meeting.

District Commander Andy Prophet reported that generally there was a positive picture to be seen in terms of reported crime during the months of August and September. During this period a total of 47 crimes were reported in Rochford, compared with 62 crimes reported in the same 2-month period in 2007. There were 6 crimes reported in Ashingdon and Canewdon compared with 12 in the previous year and 21 reported in Barling & Sutton, Foulness & Great Wakering, compared with 27 in the previous year.

In respect of ASB, Rochford had 156 incidents recorded in August and September, compared with 160 in the previous year, Ashingdon and Canewdon had remained unchanged since 2007 at 19 reported incidents and Barling & Sutton, Foulness & Great Wakering had 24 reported incidents compared to 53 the previous year. It was appreciated, however, that not all ASB is reported and there were issues of unacceptable behaviour in specific pockets of the District.

Of Rochford's total of 47 reported crimes, 21 related to criminal damage and 12 to assaults and woundings. Ashingdon and Canewdon's total of 6 reported crimes comprised 3 incidents of criminal damage and 3 assaults. Barling & Sutton, Foulness & Great Wakering's total of 15 reported crimes included 5 incidents of criminal damage and 3 assaults and woundings.

Rochford as a District did not have a burglary problem, which was in contrast with the general picture across the rest of Essex, which had seen an increase in burglaries this year. Just one burglary had been reported in Rochford, 5 in the Foulness and Great Wakering area (the majority of which were due to domestic issues) and none in Ashingdon and Canewdon.

In terms of staff resourcing, Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) had been moved around the various neighbourhood teams within the east of the District in accordance with the benefits that each PCSO could bring to the area with his particular skills.

It was noted that one police priority was the control of anti-social behaviour in specific areas, such as Rochford Square, St Mark's Field and St Clare Meadow, predominantly on Friday and Saturday nights.

A sum of £5,500 had been allocated by the Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership to put additional police officers in Rochford, and other areas if necessary, on Friday and Saturday nights. It had been decided that four additional policing staff would be employed to work from 8pm to 2am on Friday and Saturday nights.

Focus would also be given to providing more support from the Police dog section to control dogs in Canewdon Park and to deploy officers with cameras to record incidents.

In general terms, however, the Rochford District was a safe, low crime area.

In response to questions, Andy advised:-

- That with regard to a report of illegal substance growing in Great Wakering, the police would need specific details to enable them to investigate the matter.
- That, following last year's successful policing of Canewdon at Halloween, a full team of police would be deployed to the area this year.

(2) Update on the Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park

The Council's Woodlands & Environmental Officer advised that following the successful development of the first stage of the development of the country park, planning consent had been granted for change of use for land to the east and west of the existing country park. The land to the west was now in Rochford District Council's ownership and the land to the east would be in the Council's ownership in the autumn. Last year a period of five months' consultation with residents and various user groups had been completed. The next stage was to give presentations to each of the Area Committees on the provisional broad concepts prior to the next five year plan being agreed at the Executive in November.

Initial drawings and applications had been produced and submitted to various agencies in order to secure funding for the development of both of these areas. It was hoped that a 'countryside experience' could be provided.

An application had been made to the Forestry Authority for the possibility of 7 new woodland plantings of native trees in the country park, which, if granted, would represent the biggest single application in Essex.

In respect of vehicular access to the park, ECC Highways had recently agreed that a 'left in, left out' design would be acceptable to serve the proposed car park. It was anticipated that vehicular facilities would be undertaken in year 3 of the 5-year development of the site. There would also be a visitor centre and toilet block and it was hoped that a building could be produced that had a negative carbon footprint and be constructed with materials grown on site.

Possible ideas for the country park included the re-creation of a marsh wetland habitat with provision for birds and fauna, planting of species rich grassland as well as trees. It was anticipated that the project would commence at the end of November.

Following discussion, the following was noted:-

- That the current proposed design did not provide for re-siting the existing gun club as there were safety considerations. In response to a request that the provision of an alternative site for the club within the District be found. Members were advised that attempts had been made and officers would continue to research other possible options for the club. It was noted that there were a number of similar facilities in other parts of Essex.
- That 'before and after' photos could be taken now and then again on completion of the project to show the how the trees and flora and fauna had matured; these photos could be displayed in the Visitor Centre.

In respect of a question from a member of the public regarding the horses that were currently being kept on the land, steps had been taken with the existing owner's permission to secure the site and as soon as the land came into the Council's ownership, the horse owner would be requested to remove the horses immediately.

288 EAST AREA UPDATE

The Committee received the East Area update.

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

Confirmation that a diversion had been put in place was required.

Resurfacing of Brays Lane to the Baltic Wharf (32/07)

Following confirmation that capital funding was now available for a scheme during 2008/09, a start date for the works was requested.

Stalls at Rochford Market (23/08)

It was requested that feedback be provided on whether market traders were adhering to the 'six-foot rule' between stalls and shop fronts.

Flooding in specific areas in Great Wakering (28/08)

An update was requested on the results of the visits undertaken by the ECC Drainage Engineer to various sites in Great Wakering. It was further noted that the corner of Crouchmans Avenue and High Street had flooded right across during the recent heavy rains. Another site identified was the corner opposite the police station in Rochford.

Sutton Road drains/potholes (32/08)

It was reported that the gullies were still not running freely and that there were still potholes. Since repairs had taken place, deterioration of the road had been seen. Another area of concern was the road from the Anne Boleyn pub to Purdeys Industrial Estate where the road surface was below the level of gullies, which caused flooding in this area.

Following a site visit from Essex County Highways in the summer 2008, it was requested that a date be provided for commencement of works to the County Highways scheme to widen the footpath to Stambridge school, for which funding was available.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm.

Chairman

Date

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

Appendix

Question

Response

M Rudd, Canewdon

Managing Flood Risk; South Essex Flood Management Plans – re page 11, Policy Option 2. Area from Shoeburyness to Dengie to South Woodham Ferrers (approx 200,000 homes?)

James Duddridge MP now identified to Parliament 24,000 homes at risk of flooding – will the Council notify those at risk of the problem? If not, why not, as the Civil Contingencies Act 2005 must be obeyed?

S Guy, Canewdon

Would it be possible to close the park at Canewdon at night due to noise nuisance by youths during the night?

Roy and Jason, Canewdon

Is there a possibility of having some new skateboard ramps in Canewdon Park.

Mr & Mrs Bateman, Canewdon

- Why is there no handrail by the steps in Willow Walk, Canewdon? As a result, elderly people cannot use the steps and have to go the long way round to the shops. The rail by steps near Woodfords on sea wall is unnecessary.
- The area around the steps in Willow Walk is disgraceful, with litter everywhere and broken bottles often covering the pavement at the base of the steps.
- There are unsightly oil slicks on

Question

the road by the steps in Willow Walk.

- There is dog excrement consistently on the corner of Rowan Way by High Hedge, which is a hazard at night. Additionally, there is dog excrement in Anchor Lane opposite the allotments.
- Dogs in the Cedars, Anchor Lane area howling and barking all hours of the night due being shut in garden. There is also the noise nuisance of dogs shut in gardens all day barking constantly.
- There is litter all along Anchor Lane opposite the allotments.
- There are children (sometimes quite young children) running riot in Willow Walk, overturning bins and causing damage generally.

Response

An Environmental Enforcement Officer has been employed by the Council with powers to investigate and, if necessary, take action against incidents of dog fouling in public places. The Enforcement Officer is available to undertake regular patrols, including early morning and late evening visits if necessary.

The Council's Environmental Health officers have powers to deal with noise nuisance caused by barking dogs but would need additional information to pursue this matter, including the address where the dog was housed.

Rochford's Neighbourhood Support Officer, Gary Tween, would be notified in respect of the reported anti-social behaviour by children in Canewdon.