

East Area Committee – 12 December 2007

Minutes of the meeting of the **East Area Committee** held on **12 December 2007** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr C G Seagers
Vice-Chairman: Cllr T E Goodwin

Cllr J P Cottis
Cllr T G Cutmore

Cllr Mrs S A Harper
Cllr Mrs B J Wilkins

ALSO PRESENT

Cllr Mrs P Shaw	-	Ashingdon Parish Council
Cllr Mrs M S Vince	-	Rochford Parish Council
ACI A Parkman	-	Essex Police

OFFICERS PRESENT

J Bourne	-	Head of Community Services
D Timson	-	Property Maintenance & Highways Manager
J Bostock	-	Committee Services Manager

426 AREA COMMITTEE – INITIAL BUSINESS

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs T J Capon (Rochford District Council), V Newby (Canewdon Parish Council), B Wright (Great Wakering Parish Council), D Whittingham (Paglesham Parish Council) and P A Capon (Stambridge Parish Council).

Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 31 October 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Declarations of Interest

Cllr T G Cutmore declared a prejudicial interest in a question submitted on the erection of lighting in the car park adjacent to Ashingdon Memorial Hall by virtue of being the Hall Bookings Secretary and left the meeting during its consideration. Cllr Mrs P Shaw declared a personal interest in the same item by virtue of being the Ashingdon Parish Council Representative.

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

427 COMMUNITY FORUM

A request for information on the erection of lighting in the car park adjacent to Ashingdon Memorial Hall had been received in advance of the meeting and a

document summarising this, together with the officer response, was circulated to all those present (a copy is appended). It was noted that Ashingdon Parish Council had now approved a grant for lighting works and that District Council officers would be pleased to discuss the options in detail.

A written question relating to flood defence had been submitted by Mr B Efde of Essex Flood Forum. A copy of this and the officer response given at the meeting is also appended.

The Chairman advised that officers would liaise with the Great Waking Community Association on the question of the provision of a wheelie bin for its premises, such bins usually being provided for domestic properties.

It was noted that Area Committee meetings are publicised in the Council's newspaper "Rochford District Matters" and on the Council's website. There has been some publicity in a community association publication and notices were placed in District Council reception areas and supplied to Parish Clerks. Officers confirmed that consideration would be given to increasing the number of notices provided to Parish Clerks and to providing notices to the libraries.

It was confirmed that officers could respond to specific questions on planning matters, such as proposals relating to 254 High Street, Great Waking, if contact details are provided. There was no knowledge of a planning application having been submitted in respect of the Brickfields site. Prior to the close of the Forum, the Chairman referred to a communication from Cllr Mrs S A Harper and Cllr Mrs M S Vince on a recent successful event in Rochford Market Square and whether further events could be planned within the town, aimed at maximising the potential of the town and utilising local charitable organisations, the Parish Council and trade organisations and the assistance of the District Council. Cllr Mrs S A Harper had also communicated concern about the potential closure of the Post Office in North Street, Rochford voiced by the public at a recent Rochford Regeneration Group drop-in session.

The Chairman confirmed that it would be appropriate for both these items to be future spotlight subjects.

At this point the Committee reconvened into formal session.

428 SPOTLIGHT ISSUES

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

Acting Chief Inspector Andy Parkman reported that there had been an improvement across the District in terms of reported crimes and anti-social behaviour (ASB) figures. Seven young persons acceptable behaviour contracts were in place across the District. The basket of crime and ASB figures for the period April 2007 to March 2008 were tabled. It was noted that a priority identified through the Neighbourhood Action Panel for Rochford had been youth nuisance. Priority areas identified for Great Waking had been:

anti-social behaviour and underage drinking; vandalism in the High Street, Great Wakering and speeding vehicles.

Responding to questions, Andy Parkman advised that:-

- The overall reported crime clear-up rate was 31.6%. The rate was a marked improvement on three years ago, and figures demonstrating this could be made available at the next meeting when the Police are in attendance.
- The codes in the reported offence line of the tabled statistics related to Police beat codes.

Responding to the issue of irresponsible dog ownership raised at a previous meeting, Andy Parkman advised on the nature of the legislation relating to dangerous dogs – specifically the 1906 Dogs Act (which is to be replaced by the Cleaner Neighbourhood and Environment Act) and the Environmental Protection Act 1990. It was noted that, whilst there is no statutory duty on Police Officers to seize a dangerous dog from the highway, if the public is affected, the Police would secure public safety by whatever means are practicable.

(2) Update on the Playspace Rolling Programme

David Timson, Property Maintenance and Highways Manager at Rochford District Council, provided an update on the Playspace Rolling Programme.

The Programme had been running since 1991. There was a budget of £50,000 per annum, which normally enabled the refurbishment of two playspaces. In terms of the current programme, work at Seaview Drive, Great Wakering and the Canewdon Recreation Ground was out to tender, with tenders being returned prior to Christmas.

Seaview Drive had been included in the programme following a period of problems with anti-social behaviour and neighbour nuisance. A public meeting had been arranged, with Councillor Mrs B J Wilkins as chairman, to establish the way forward. The adopted solution was to reduce the area of the playspace and make it solely for infant/toddler use. The useable area of the playspace was being reduced by building a 5 metre buffer zone between the new playspace and the neighbours affected. This would reduce the potential for older children to play ball games, which constituted much of the nuisance, and the likelihood of older children wishing to be seen in the new playspace. Works would be undertaken during the Spring of 2008.

429 EAST AREA UPDATE

The Committee received the East Area update.

It was noted that the update should have included all issues outstanding from the last meeting, including replacement of the plastic banding on the bollards

outside the White Hart in Great Wakering High Street, and would be reviewed accordingly. It was also noted that the District Council's Review Committee was undertaking a review of the recently introduced system of Area Committees, which would no doubt include issues such as the appropriateness of venues and nature of documentation.

Metal Protruding from Ground on Tarmac Path between the Co-Op and Conway Avenue, Great Wakering (19/07)

It was noted that the District Council's Head of Legal Services had been in correspondence with local householders.

Reinstatement of "Slow" Sign on the Southend Road, Great Wakering on the Approach to the Entrance to Morley's Nursery (20/07)

It was noted that County Highways was in negotiation with the developer on a number of outstanding items and the contract would only be signed off once all these had been completed. Weather permitting, work would be completed in the first two weeks of the New Year. The District Council's Head of Community Services would pursue this matter.

The Clearing of Litter and Cleaning the Area around the New Somerfield Development in Rochford

The Head of Community Services advised that he would follow up a concern that litter clearing was only taking place at the very front of the Somerfield store.

Ruts and Ridges in the Road Surface in Ashingdon Road in the Vicinity of Hall Road/Dalys Road (23/07)

It was noted that some patch repair had commenced.

Cutting of Overgrown Vegetation along Sutton Road (26/07)

It was noted that overgrown vegetation had been cut.

Why Two Houses are to be built in New Road, Great Wakering which is allegedly on a Flood Plain

It was noted that officers now had further information on the addresses of the properties in question.

Drainage problems at the Junction of Little Wakering, Hall Lane with High Street, Great Wakering (31/07)

It was noted that the Parish Clerk had sent photographs to Essex County Highways.

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The meeting closed at 9.12pm.

Chairman

Date

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

Appendix

Question	Response
<p>R W Levey, Chairman of Ashingdon & East Hawkwell Memorial Hall Management Committee</p> <p>Please could you erect some form of lighting in the car park at the above hall? The reasons are as follows:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In the past months the following incidents have occurred: At least 8 windows have been broken due to youngsters either playing football or throwing bricks at the windows; The hall has been vandalised quite severely, including 3 break-ins. 2. Public attendance at functions in the hall has fallen, due to the vandalism, and it is believed that some form of lighting would reduce vandalism and make the hall seem a safer place. 3. Damage caused by vandalism has been expensive to repair. In addition, the Hall Management Committee has been advised to erect metal grills over the windows facing the car park and to install intruder alarms. 4. Lighting would also assist people, some of whom are elderly, who use the hall or the adjacent King George Playing Fields in terms of visibility and a feeling of security. <p>The Police have recommended that some form of lighting be installed and that the District Council should be approached in this respect. They mentioned that it would most certainly reduce the crime factor as a result.</p>	<p>Although the car park is the responsibility of Rochford District Council, a bid for lighting would have to be prepared for next year, as this year's programme is already under scrutiny as part of the budget process and is likely to be fully prescribed, so that making choices about current priorities is an issue.</p> <p>However it is possible for the trustees of the Hall to install wall-mounted lighting from the building to illuminate the car park on all sides if required. We may be able to provide help on this in terms of advice etc. Wall-mounted lighting could be the best and most economical form of illumination and would be quicker to install. Rochford District Council may be able to contribute towards this if funding is available.</p>

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Question	Response
Ashingdon Parish Council at their meeting on 5/11/07 agreed that lighting should be installed and advised they would be willing to pay an amount towards the project. They request that RDC assist in this matter.	
<p>B Efde, Essex Flood Forum</p> <p>Are Councillors aware of the declared level of the flood defence in Great Wakering and Rochford?</p> <p>Are Councillors aware of the difference between the risk and insurability levels of defence?</p>	<p>The body responsible for providing information about levels of flood protection is the Environment Agency, and not Rochford District Council, though the areas in the District considered by the Agency to be at risk from flooding are shown on the adopted Local Plan Proposals Map.</p> <p>Property insurance is not a matter for Rochford District Council, but if a question relating to insurance is asked by an existing or potential resident, they are advised to contact either the Association of British Insurers or the Environment Agency for help and further information.</p>