

West Area Committee – 29 January 2009

Minutes of the meeting of the **West Area Committee** held on **29 January 2009** when there were present:-

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

Cllr Mrs P Aves	Cllr C J Lumley
Cllr C I Black	Cllr Mrs J R Lumley
Cllr Mrs J Dillnutt	Cllr D Merrick
Cllr K A Gibbs	Cllr Mrs J A Mockford
Cllr A J Humphries	Cllr Mrs M J Webster
Cllr T Livings	

ALSO PRESENT

Cllr Mrs C Roe	- Rayleigh Town Council
Cllr A Matthews	- Rawreth Parish Council
L Harvey	- Essex County Council

OFFICERS PRESENT

R Evans	- Head of Environmental Services
S Fowler	- Head of Information and Customer Services
S Scrutton	- Head of Planning and Transportation
S Worthington	- Committee Administrator

25 AREA COMMITTEE – INITIAL BUSINESS

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs J E Grey, R A Oatham and P F A Webster.

Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2008 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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

Questions raised during the Community Forum and the responses given are summarised in the appendix to the Minutes.

In response to a query from a resident relating to the Core Strategy debate at the last meeting, officers advised that the Minutes of all Area Committee meetings are available on the Council website.

26 SPOTLIGHT ISSUES

Lyn Harvey reported on highway works programmed within Rawreth and Rayleigh.

Gas Mains Replacement Works

National Grid has been working non-stop in Rayleigh for some months now. Further major gas mains replacement works will commence on 2 February 2009 and continue for approximately 40 weeks. This will affect Downhall Road at the junction with Hambro Hill, which will necessitate a 3-way traffic signal arrangement; works will continue down to London Road, London Hill, Bellingham Lane, High Road and up to Rayleigh Weir. The works in Hockley Road should finish next week. County officers would be discussing the timing of gas mains replacement works in Crown Hill with National Grid, given the other works going on in and around Rayleigh. In addition to the gas mains replacement works, there has been a gas leak in Station Road; works to rectify this should be completed by the weekend.

Making Potholes History Scheme

County Cllr N Hume has allocated a specific budget for the County Council's Making Potholes History scheme, aimed at delivering a better quality road surface by conducting pothole repairs before they become too large. A highly visible pothole patrol will start work in Rayleigh, using specialist equipment to make permanent, rather than temporary repairs to potholes, with the programme rolling out until the end of March. The scheme will not be used on larger patches which are either greater than two square metres or 100mm deep – these will be dealt with using existing methods. Lyn Harvey should be notified of any roads requiring specific attention.

Highways Localism

The new financial year sees the introduction of the Highways Localism initiative, which is aimed at empowering the local community to best direct funds of up to £1million on highways within the District; this far exceeds funds previously allocated under the locally determined budget. The County Council will offer professional advice and help in prioritising schemes put forward. Letters have been sent out to Parish and District Councillors inviting them to provide details of highways schemes for consideration as part of the initiative for 2009/10. It will be possible to deliver larger schemes than in recent years, given the much higher budget available.

To complement schemes undertaken under the Localism initiative, a rangers gang will be out and about the district undertaking minor, low priority repairs, eg, to holes in highways identified locally, not bigger than a depth of 100mm and dealing with overgrown hedges and plants, etc.

The following responses were noted, in response to questions raised:-

- When gas mains replacement works are undertaken in Crown Hill, there will be traffic signals in operation to control the flow of traffic for the duration of the works.
- Cllr Mrs J A Mockford will be provided with a detailed update on the public consultation relating to time restrictions for car parking in Little Wheatley Chase outside the meeting.
- County officers would inspect the kerb lines and verges in Trinity Close to assess what repairs will be required once the gas mains replacement works are completed.
- In advance of the prioritisation of schemes for the 2009/10 localism budget any works required in Rawreth Lane will be addressed if there is a hazard or threat to people's safety.
- The localism scheme will include an additional category to ensure that major maintenance issues will be addressed.
- Cones placed in Teignmouth Drive. Rayleigh have been removed; they were placed there prematurely, in advance of the programmed scheme of gas mains replacement works.
- Officers will advise Cllr C I Black outside the meeting whether a response has been received from Skanska with respect to sponsorship of the Rayleigh Arts Festival.
- Ward Councillors will be updated outside the meeting on progress with respect to the scheme to bring the unmade roads of Eastwood Rise, Rayleigh Avenue and Sandhill Road up to a standard that the County Council would be prepared to adopt.
- County officers will provide Cllr A J Humphries with details of how the 2008 Road Traffic Act relates to yellow lines outside the meeting.

27 WEST AREA UPDATE

The Committee received the West area update.

24/08 – Lack of Consultation with Rawreth Parish Council on the Recent Positioning of 2 Victorian Street Lights on the Bridge at Battlesbridge (Minute 269/08)

In response to the observation that one of the street lights was on the south side of the Crouch thus falling within Rawreth Parish, Lyn Harvey confirmed that she will contact the Chairman of Rawreth Parish Council after completing enquiries into this matter.

23/08 – Extension of Double Yellow Lines in Trinity Road, junction with Warwick Road, Rayleigh (Minute 268/08)

It was observed that the extension of yellow lines to the roads running from Grove Road up to Eastwood Road could be considered for consideration in the 2009/10 localism budget.

16/08 – Feasibility Study for a Pedestrian Crossing at the top of Downhall Park Way, near Rawreth Lane (Minute 269/08)

The feasibility study has been completed and has highlighted a number of potential improvements using section 106 monies from Asda in the vicinity of the store, which will help cyclists, pedestrian and equestrian traffic. The scheme proposed is a complicated one that will involve traffic signals, but it is a viable scheme that will need to go out to public consultation.

28/08 – Consideration of Bridle Way Access to the West of the Proposed Country Park where it Joins the New England Woods (Minute 334/08)

The Member advisory group has reported to the Executive and it has been agreed that officers will look into the feasibility of access from the west of the park into Connaught Road and whether a bridle way can be established.

28 Matters Arising from the Executive/Issues to Refer to the Executive

Cllr A Matthews observed that item 13 of the Agenda of the Executive on 28 January 2009 was deferred, and asked whether an extension to Rawreth car park could be considered by the Executive as an alternative.

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm.

Chairman

Date

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

T Webber, Rayleigh

How often is the footpath between Daws Heath Road and Nursery Close cleaned or at least kept free from litter and graffiti?

This is cleaned on an 'as needed' basis because it is an EPA (Environmental Protection Act) contract. This means that the contractor monitors the footpath and arranges clearance as soon as required. This footpath has been monitored by an RDC Contract Monitoring Officer as well on a regular basis. Graffiti removal is also organised when needed; a removal has been arranged for the week commencing 26 January 2009.

Richard Evans would provide Mr Webber with detailed information relating to the footpath outside the meeting.

When will the large number of bottles and tins deposited near the bus stop on the corner of Downhall Road / Preston Gardens be removed?

This area will be monitored by the Council's contract monitoring officers and appropriate action taken.

A Stone, Rayleigh

1. Could the section of Rawreth Lane in the vicinity of Trender Avenue be inspected again in order that work is funded from the 2009/10 budget?

Rawreth Lane has already been identified as being in need of major re-surfacing. It will be identified as one of the schemes for consideration as part of the 2009/10 localism budget.

2. Could the standing water problem in the gutters along Rawreth Lane be rectified at the same time as the road problem?

This will be included as part of the scheme above, to be dealt with at the same time.

3. Could be pavement along this stretch of Rawreth Lane be re-surfaced?

The footpath will be inspected to determine whether or not there are specific patches that can be rectified in the short-term.

4. Why are pavements never swept on major roads such as Rawreth Lane?

The kerb line along Rawreth Lane will be swept on 30 January 2009; the verge will also be swept shortly.

5. With respect to plants encroaching on the pavement and road at Downhall Road/Hambro Avenue and the concrete starting to crumble there, could an article be included in *Rochford District Matters* asking garden owners adjoining footpaths to cut back their plants in order to minimise the potential for damage to pavements?

The Council acknowledges that there has been a problem with regular sweeping of Rawreth Lane and other roads in the vicinity. These issues have been brought to the attention of the contractors and they have increased the level of supervision in respect of this key service area. Whilst officers have noticed an improvement in some roads we are continuing to work closely with the contractor to achieve a permanent solution to this issue. The kerb line would be cleaned the following day.

A County Highways inspector would be sent to inspect the footpath and road in this location to assess whether any remedial action might be taken with respect to the cracks in the pavement and road. The overhanging vegetation would be inspected at the same time and letters sent to residents, where necessary