

Central Area Committee – 12 June 2007

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

Chairman: Cllr D G Stansby

Cllr Mrs R Brown

Cllr Mrs L A Butcher

Cllr P A Capon

Cllr Mrs L M Cox

Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn

Cllr K H Hudson

Cllr J R F Mason

Cllr M G B Starke

Cllr Mrs C A Weston

VISITING MEMBERS

Cllr C G Seagers

OFFICERS PRESENT

A Bugeja	- Head of Legal Services
R Evans	- Head of Environmental Services
D Byrne	- Waste Management Officer
S Worthington	- Committee Administrator

ALSO PRESENT

Cllr J Dickson	- Hawkwell Parish Council
Cllr B Hazlewood	- Hockley Parish Council
Cllr Miss A Marriott	- Hullbridge Parish Council
CI J Walker	- Essex Police
L Harvey	- County Highways
K Paul	- South East Essex Primary Care Trust

196 CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the very first Area Committee meeting for the Rochford District and outlined the emergency evacuation procedures.

The Chairman stressed that the Central Area Committee covered the areas of Hawkwell, Hockley and Hullbridge and the District Ward Members representing those wards were in attendance, together with representatives from the three Parish Councils.

The Chairman outlined the format of the agenda, highlighting that the community forum was intended for members of the public to ask any questions that they may have and reminding them that they should complete a request sheet to list their questions.

197 COMMUNITY FORUM

No questions were raised by members of the public.

198 SPOTLIGHT ISSUES

Southend Road, Hockley – Car Park: Update

CI Walker advised that the car park, situated in the centre of Hockley, had been a local issue in the Hockley area for a number of years. Residents had complained about anti-social behaviour there; there had been incidences of ball games and vehicular activity resulting in noise and disturbance to residents. Partnership work, which had included the Police, Hockley Parish Council and Rochford District Council, had resulted in some physical changes to the area. Special gates had been erected, fences had been re-aligned, recycling bins relocated and better secured and a new dog fouling bin installed. There had been practically no incidents in the car park in the last few weeks and the situation was much improved.

CI Walker told the meeting that Hawkwell, Hockley and Hullbridge were reasonably quiet in terms of crime. In April there were 4 offences in Hawkwell and 4 in May. In Hockley there were 24 crimes in April and 15 crimes in May. There were 19 offences committed in Hullbridge in April and 6 in May. Crime had reduced in comparison to the previous year. Anti-social behaviour was a key concern for residents, and this was now being measured by the Police on a monthly basis. There had been a 36% reduction in instances of anti-social behaviour in April/May compared to the same period during the previous year.

In response to questions, the following responses were noted:-

- It would not be appropriate to give a lengthy answer this evening on issues relating to anti-social behaviour in Plumberow Mount and the congregation of youths in Hockley town centre; there were a number of ongoing issues that the Police were working to resolve. Community Support Officers were working on the ground to tackle these issues. Additional Police resources had been placed in Hockley over the past 18 months to 2 years and a number of public meetings had been held to discuss these issues. CI Walker would be happy to report back to the next Area Committee on these matters,
- It was too early to determine whether the new skateboarding equipment at Clements Hall had made any impact with respect to anti social behaviour in that area. The Police were happy for youths to congregate in the vicinity of Clements Hall, however, since there were a number of activities available to them there. The Police would like to see future premises developed for youths that would encourage them away from the streets.

Environmental Campaign – Update

Ms Byrne advised that Rochford District Council's environmental campaign was launched in September 2005 and 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, publicity in *Rochford District Matters* and 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, including Rivercare and 2 local churches. 994 tasks were completed during the course of the campaign in the period from September 2005 – March 2007. 741 sites (excluding those with graffiti) had been tackled around the district. Graffiti had been removed from 388 sites.

Pavements had been washed, waste had been removed and 54 signs placed around the district publicising the monitoring of hot spots. 49 un-taxed cars had been towed away, with 20 subsequently scrapped and the remaining 29 resulting in fines paid by their owners. 17% of tasks completed during the campaign had been carried out in the Central Area of the Rochford District. In addition it was noted that graffiti was removed by contractors twice a month.

In response to questions, the following was noted:-

- The District Council was keen to enforce with respect to dog fouling. It was, however, difficult to prosecute offenders because it was necessary to actually catch dog owners in the act. Consideration was being given as to how this matter could be further addressed.
- Refuse collection, recycling, street cleansing and grounds maintenance contracts expired in March 2008 and the District Council was currently in the process of contract procurement for these service areas. It was anticipated that proposals would come back to the Area Committee later in the year in order that members of the public could be consulted on how the proposals might be progressed.
- All possible waste management options were being considered as part of the contract procurement process. Nothing was being ruled out in terms of recycling and the procurement process is at an advanced stage.
- It was difficult to introduce a recycling service for residents living in flats above the shops at Golden Cross, as it was feared that communal recycling bins for residents would be utilised by retailers.

A resident observed that in another part of Hawkwell residents of flats above shops were provided with wheeled bins that were clearly labelled

with the numbers of their properties. There had not been any subsequent misuse of residents' bins by businesses.

It was noted that this issue would be further investigated by District Council officers and reported back.

- The twice-monthly graffiti removal service covered Parish Council areas. Parish Councils could request the removal of graffiti from areas under their jurisdiction, including, for example, Magnolia Park.
- A response would be provided at the next meeting as to whether or not businesses in the district had been asked to take part in a "share a bin" scheme.

The Chairman announced that, as Cllr Mrs M J Webster had been delayed in joining the meeting, an update on highway matters would be provided to the meeting by Ms Harvey from County Highways.

County Highways – Update

Ms Harvey advised that a re-construction of Rectory Road had been completed last Thursday, ahead of schedule. This had been tricky work, with safety issues for those working on site. A programme of footpath works had commenced to meet Government criteria. Work had been completed in Plumberow Avenue, Bramerton Road and Ashway and work would be carried out on footpaths in Greensward Lane and Southend Road later in the year.

A Member observed that there had been a marked improvement in roads to the left of the Ashingdon Road, going up Ashingdon Hill.

In response to questions, the following was noted:-

- There were different types of cats' eyes available. Cats' eyes in Lower Road would not be removed. County Highway officers would, however, look at the stretch of road and assess whether it might be necessary to put in some different cats' eyes, possibly ones that would be more set into the road surface.
- District Members would be advised of the anticipated date for completion of works to the Brays Lane junction.

199 AREA COMMITTEE – FORMAL MEETING

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs L Hungate and J Thomass.

Appointment of Vice-Chairman

Cllr Mrs C A Weston was appointed Vice-Chairman of the Central Area Committee.

Terms of Reference

The terms of reference for the Central Area Committee were noted.

200 CENTRAL AREA UPDATE

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Environmental Services which provided an update on a series of local issues.

Leecon Way GP Surgery and Hawkwell Park Drive GP Surgery

Ms Paul of the South East Primary Care Trust advised that the Trust was managing both these practices. Mr Andrew Hathaway was providing support to the practices and working closely with practice staff to continue service provision. A productive meeting had taken place which had involved patient representatives and it had been agreed that the Trust would remain in monthly contact with these representatives.

Skateboarding Ramp at Clements Hall Leisure Centre

It was noted that this new facility for youngsters had been achieved through partnership working by Police, the District Council and Parish Councils, and as a result of a contribution made by the Rochford Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, without which the facility would not have been possible. The work of the local spray can artist who had worked hard on an artwork project at the site was also noted.

It was noted that Hawkwell Parish Council had made available £10,000 for a survey to be conducted among youths in Hawkwell. It was hoped that the outcome of the survey could be reported and discussed at the next meeting of the Area Committee. The Parish Council was hoping to put in a portacabin facility and a proper graffiti board for youngsters at the Hawkwell playing field in the future. The Parish Council would be seeking grant support from other agencies in order to provide facilities for youngsters identified by the survey.

Hockley Bakery Prosecuted

One Member expressed disappointment that the District Council had had to take legal action against a local business.

In response to questions, the following was noted:-

- All such premises are regularly inspected by Council officers. Premises identified as high risk premises are visited every 3 to 6 months and low

risk premises are inspected every 2 to 3 years.

- In determining whether a premises is a high risk premises factors such as likely numbers and type of customers, confidence in the management of the premises and the condition of the premises, are taken into consideration, which in turn determines the frequency of inspections.
- There would be more frequent inspections of the bakery that had been prosecuted.
- Any issues relating to takeaway food outlets operating outside of their licensed hours should be referred to the District Council's Licensing officers.

Recycling for Schools

Ms Byrne advised that out of 30 schools in the district, 17 had expressed an interest in taking part in the District Council's schools recycling scheme. Colour coded wheeled bins would be provided to the schools, one for paper, one for glass and one for cans, depending on what individual schools wished to have. Ashingdon School was the first school to take part in the scheme, with Rochford Primary School due to join the service soon.

In response to a question relating to the frequency of bin emptying in schools, Ms Byrne advised that bins would be emptied when full, rather than having a designated frequency of collection.

Resolved

That the contents of the report be noted. (HES)

In concluding the meeting, the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and for helping to make this first meeting a success.

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm.

Chairman

Date

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