

East Area Committee – 14 October 2009

Minutes of the meeting of the **East Area Committee** held on **14 October 2009** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr C G Seagers
Vice-Chairman: Cllr M J Steptoe

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

Cllr T E Goodwin
Cllr Mrs G A Lucas-Gill
Cllr Mrs B J Wilkins

ALSO PRESENT

Cllr R Pearson, Essex County Council
Cllr Mrs P Shaw, Ashingdon Parish Council
Cllr Mrs D Dobson, Barling Magna Parish Council
Cllr V Newby, Canewdon Parish Council
Cllr Mrs K Perring, Great Wakering Parish Council
Mr I Puzey, Paglesham Parish Council
Cllr P A Capon, Stambridge Parish Council
A Hilsdon, District Manager, Essex County Highways

OFFICERS PRESENT

J Bourne - Head of Community Services
S Worthington - Committee Administrator

245 AREA COMMITTEE – INITIAL BUSINESS

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr N Wallace (Canewdon Parish Council), Cllr D Whittingham (Paglesham Parish Council) and Cllr J Bond (Rochford Parish Council).

Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2009 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.

246 COMMUNITY FORUM

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

It was noted, in response to a supplementary concern raised by Mr Efde about the flood warnings process in the event of flood warnings, that any

associated concerns should be raised with the Environment Agency, as the statutory body. Mr Efde was further advised that there could be merit in raising the issue with the County Council Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste.

At this point the Committee re-convened into formal session.

247 SPOTLIGHT ISSUES

Update on Highways Localism

The Committee considered the report of the County Highways Area Manager, South providing an update on Highways Localism.

In response to questions, the County Highways officer confirmed the following:-

- County Highways was aware of the foot path problems associated with the new development of flats by the garage in Great Wakering and would intervene and do the necessary works at the end of the month/early November, in the event of the developer not addressing the problem.
- Foot paths had been inspected in Canewdon, but it was not possible to confirm when this had last been done; County officers would check any specific foot paths that were the cause of concern. Repairs to foot paths were prioritised according to a variety of criteria, including whether or not it is in a busy location, in the vicinity of schools, GP surgeries or residential homes; if it is crumbling it will be higher priority than flaking at the edges or cracks. Any footpath areas requiring works over 20 metres would have to be funded from a capital fund, but repairs of large areas of footpath below 20 metres in length could, in theory, be repaired within 2 hours, depending on the results of prioritisation.
- Delays to the Sutton Ford Bridge scheme were as a result of difficulties associated with the purchase of land from more than one landowner; it was hoped that the scheme might be delivered in the next financial year.
- The list of works set out within the Area Manager's reports were works that had been identified by Councillors and residents within the Rochford District ; County Highways would continue to engage with the District Council and residents in order to develop a scheme of works that reflected the needs of the District, but this had to be set against limited resources.
- An update would be provided to Cllr P A Capon on the first item on page 4.2 of the report, confirming the anticipated timescale for the

works, in light of concern expressed relating to road safety.

- County Council policy on extending speed limits within residential areas is aligned with Central Government guidance. Requests for extensions to speed limits were prioritised according to set criteria, including whether roads were in the vicinity of schools, play spaces, the number of residential properties on both sides of the road. Further details would be provided to Cllr P A Capon outside the meeting.
- The District Manager would arrange a site visit, to include Cllr P A Capon, to assess the condition of the stretch of footpath between the Cherry Tree public house and the school in Stambridge Road and to determine what actions might be taken.
- The District Manager would discuss the final item on page 4.17 of the report with Cllr P A Capon outside the meeting.
- A site visit to Barling Primary School with Cllr M J Steptoe and Cllr R Pearson would be organised in order to assess issues relating to parking.
- The District Manager would consult with the Police and the County Council legal department with respect to the proposal to make Church Road access only and would provide an update for the next meeting.
- The indicative costs of the footpath scheme for Poynters Lane/Waking Road/Cupids Corner listed on page 4.10 of the report were in excess of £100,000; the costs associated with a 100-metre length of footpath were around £10,000 - £15,000. The District Manager would discuss the scheme further with Great Waking Parish Council, in light of a previous agreement for the MoD to make land available.
- Details of roads that had been repaired or re-surfaced and required edging white lines to be re-instated should be provided to the District Manager.
- An inspection would be organised for a hole that has appeared in the middle of Brays Lane, past Hydewood Lane, in the vicinity of the Old Rectory.
- Possibilities of using existing legislation that required landowners to intervene in the interests of health and safety would be explored by County Highways in order to address the poor condition of the footway in the vicinity of the Co-Op/estate agent/dress shop in Great Waking; it was anticipated that the Co-Op, as majority landowner, might be forced to take appropriate remedial action with respect to the footway.

248 EAST AREA UPDATE

The Committee received the East Area update.

5/09 – Speeding Motorcycles Through Great Stambridge Village (Minute 74/09 and 213/09)

An update will be provided at the next meeting of the timescale for laying down static road strips.

11/09 – Anti-Social Behaviour in Rochford Town (Minute 212/09)

The Police have identified the children and have spoken to their parents; some have been asked to sign an acceptable behaviour contract (ABC) outlining rules regarding their future conduct. In addition, the Police were looking at other ways to deal with children causing a nuisance. At present children's details are collected and officers were actively talking to groups of children of all ages offering advice on conduct and work actively in areas where youths are known to congregate, taking steps to prevent nuisance.

It was noted, in response to concern raised that this problem was, however, persisting, that a representative from Essex Police would be in attendance at the next meeting.

12/09 – Vandalism and Anti-Social Behaviour by Youths around the Old Fire Station, Great Wakering (Minute 212/09)

The Police have confirmed that this area was on their patrol plan due to its close proximity to the Co-Op. The Police had received very few reports of anti-social behaviour by youths; recent disturbances had been caused by patrons leaving the Anchor public house opposite and it was hoped that the new licensees would reduce such instances. Residents had reported concerns to the Police relating to hand rails and slopes that were planned as part of the imminent works to the public toilets that could lead to youths congregating there with skateboards.

The meeting closed at 8.55 pm.

Chairman

Date

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

Appendix

Question

Response

B Efde, Great Waking

At what stage of the flood warning process do we put our personal defences in place? Although Essex Flood Forum was advised of the flood warning on 4 October, Flood Watch has not informed all of the emergency services, the doctors' surgeries or others potentially at risk from flooding, of this or previous flood warnings.

In the Essex Flood Forum publication, Issue 2, the Essex County Council Flood Portfolio Holder is quoted as stating: "We can't tell people on flood plains what has been done to them as they would become upset". The Council's Emergency Planning Officer at the time stated that Council has no legal obligation to warn anybody of the risk of flooding.

The flood warning code system operated by the Environment Agency (EA) provides a service for areas that are at risk of flooding. Warnings are triggered for the area, which includes Great Waking, when the forecast for the gauge at Clacton exceeds pre-defined levels. There are four levels of warning and each carries recommended actions as listed below (taken from the Environment Agency website). The placing of personal flood defences is clearly identified as an action to be carried out during a flood warning (second level of warning) this is an EA suggested action. It is the responsibility of each householder to protect their own property.

Flood Watch – Flooding of low lying land and roads is expected: be aware, be prepared, watch out.

- Monitor local news and weather forecasts
- Be aware of water levels near you
- Be prepared to act on your flood plan
- Check on the safety of pets and livestock
- Charge your mobile phone.

Flood Warning – Flooding of homes and business is expected. Act now.

- Move cars, pets, food, valuables and important documents to safety
- Get flood protection equipment in place
- Turn off gas, electricity and water supplies if safe to do so
- Be prepared to evacuate your home
- Protect yourself your family and help others
- Act on your flood plan.

Severe Flood Warning – Severe flooding is expected. There is extreme danger to life and property. Act now.

- Collect things you need for evacuation
- Turn off gas, electricity and water supplies if safe to do so

Question

Response

- Stay in a high place with a means of escape
- Avoid electricity sources
- Avoid walking or driving through flood water
- In danger call 999 immediately
- Listen to emergency services
- Act on your flood plan.

All Clear – Flood watches and warnings are no longer in force for this area.

- Keep listening to weather reports
- Onl return to evacuated buildings if told it is safe
- Beware sharp objects and pollution in flood water
- If your property or belongings are damaged, contact your insurance company. Ask their advice before starting to clear up.

Floodline Warnings Direct is a free service that provides flood warnings direct to members of the public and businesses by telephone, mobile, email, SMS text message and fax. The public and business can register by postcode. All category 1 and 2 responders as defined by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (Emergency Services, Local Authorities, etc) are able to register to receive warnings by the geographical area they cover. Each organisation has its own procedure for disseminating this information internally.

J Smith, Canewdon

Are the footpaths regularly inspected? A lot of the footways in Canewdon are becoming dangerous to pedestrians with potholes and protruding manhole covers. If someone has an accident, who is liable?

Footpaths are inspected at least once a year; footpaths in busier locations are inspected more frequently. The County Council was ultimately liable for the footpaths and highways; it was, however, unreasonable to expect the Highway Authority to ensure that the entire highways network within the county was free of potholes all of the time.

J Smith, Canewdon

How can we resolve the increasing problem of car parking blocking access for refuse or emergency vehicles?

A response will be provided at the next meeting.

Question

Response

J Cushing, Great Wakering

How much money is spent on running the public toilets over 5 years and what has been the cost of the repairs for the same period?

A response will be provided at the next meeting.

P White, Great Wakering

Can provision be made to remove the grass verge in Twyford Avenue, eastern side from the double yellow lines to number 10? This to be replaced with some form of hardstanding. Vehicles have to park two wheels on the verge to allow room for larger or emergency vehicles to pass.

In cases of hazards such as a deeply rutted verge, it was usual practice for County Highways to arrange for this to be filled in and screeded. This particular case, however, might be an appropriate project to include in the Highways localism scheme. The cost of diverting pipes and cables in verges could be costly, however if the verge was empty of these the works might be done relatively easily. The Highways officer would contact the resident outside the meeting and an update would be provided at the next meeting.

B Crawley, Great Wakering

Why are the vandalism and under-age drinking issues not being dealt with? Planning proposals for toilets will encourage more vandals.

A response will be provided at the next meeting.