

## **East Area Committee – 16 September 2010**

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Minutes of the meeting of the **East Area Committee** held on **16 September 2010** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr Mrs G A Lucas-Gill

Cllr Mrs T J Capon  
Cllr T E Goodwin  
Cllr K J Gordon

Cllr C G Seagers  
Cllr Mrs B J Wilkins

### **ALSO PRESENT**

Cllr Mrs P Shaw	-	Ashingdon Parish Council
Cllr N Wallace	-	Canewdon Parish Council
Cllr J Bond	-	Rochford Parish Council
Cllr P A Capon	-	Stambridge Parish Council
Sergeant P Schwarz	-	Essex Police
N Szpigelman	-	Essex County Highways

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

Y Woodward	-	Head of Finance
S Worthington	-	Committee Administrator

## **223 AREA COMMITTEE – INITIAL BUSINESS**

### **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs J P Cottis, T G Cutmore, M J Steptoe and Cllr Mrs K Perry (Great Wakering Parish Council).

### **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2010 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.

## **224 COMMUNITY FORUM**

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

A supplementary comment from Mr Efde was noted relating to the fact that the Environment Agency had, in the past, warned the District Council that, with respect to Havengore, there was a risk of flooding from 1 to 5 years, ie a 20% risk of flooding; residents were accordingly finding it difficult to insure their properties in that area.

At this point the Committee reconvened into formal session.

### 225 SPOTLIGHT ISSUES

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

Sergeant Paul Schwarz emphasised that instances of reported crime continued to fall within the Rochford District. The Police were currently 2.5% below the cumulative crime reduction target for the District for this year and also on track to meet this year's target for serious crime reduction.

A number of cannabis factories had been uncovered by the Police within the District, as a result of information received from within the community. There had, however, been a 5.4% increase in reported instances of anti-social behaviour, compared to last year. There were approximately 15 different categories of anti-social behaviour, ranging from, eg, malicious telephone calls, to straying animals and making hoax calls. The Police were working with the Community Safety Partnership in order to address this. In addition, the Police were working with registered social landlords within the District to try to reduce the number of anti-social behaviour incidents relating to tenants. The Police were also focusing on increasing the visibility of Police Officers, especially on Friday and Saturday evenings, and were also using covert policing in an attempt to reduce the number of anti-social behaviour instances around the Roche Close area.

Sergeant Schwarz also stressed that the Police will continue past practice of increased resources for the Halloween period.

Responding to questions, Sergeant Schwarz advised that:-

- Police school liaison officers visited schools regularly and would also cover the seriousness of making hoax calls; however, adults, as well as children, were making such calls.
- Any instances of parking on pavements that were causing problems, eg, for electric wheelchairs, should be reported to the Police. Any fines collected by the Police for parking offences were not retained by the Police but sent to Central Government.
- Police resourcing was determined at divisional level. There were currently 3 PCSO's and 1 dedicated Neighbourhood Constable in Rochford; this will shortly be increased to 2 Neighbourhood Constables.
- Particular circumstances dictated whether or not Police deployed covert equipment. It was not possible to discuss in detail the type of covert equipment used by the Police in public.

### **(2) Update on Highways Localism and other Highways matters**

A schedule setting out the latest position on the programme of highway works in the East area of the District for 2010/11 and priority schemes for implementation was tabled.

Ms Szpigelman advised that the priority 1 projects previously identified by this Committee for 2010/11 were dependant on the outcome of current budget discussions.

In response to questions, Ms Szpigelman advised that:-

- Concern relating to cars heading towards Southend cutting too close to cars waiting to turn into Poynters Lane, Great Wakering would be reported back to highways officers to establish whether a surface lining could be used as part of the Star Lane re-surfacing scheme that might alleviate this problem.
- Re-surfacing of Sutton Road at the Anne Boleyn roundabout would be carried out at night.
- Blocked drains in Ashingdon Road along the stretch from Dalys Road to St Teresa's Primary School, which were causing flooding would be reported back to highways officers.
- The kerb and surfacing works in Cagefield Road, Great Stambridge had not yet been completed. A request from Cllr P A Capon for new trees to be planted at this location was noted.
- A request to move the bus outside Pylon Cottages, Lambourne Hall Road has been programmed by Highways officers. The works will be commencing shortly.
- Funding had been approved for the Stambridge traffic calming and village gateway scheme. Ms Szpigelman will contact Cllr P A Capon to discuss this scheme outside the meeting.
- A reported dip in the road in North Street, Rochford outside the Conservative Club would be reported to the inspectors the next day.
- Every attempt is made to coincide any highways works with utility works; there was an expectation that utility companies repaired roads to the same standards as highways contractors and re-do any works not meeting such standards. Inspectors regularly looked at the conditions of roads in various areas.
- An update would be provided at the next meeting as to who would be liable for accidents caused by repairs to roads completed by utility companies.

- Any instances of utilities companies leaving bollards out and areas of pavement fenced off once works are completed and causing a hazard should be reported to County Highways on the main switchboard number for South Area.

During discussion, Members extended thanks to County Highways for the work completed clearing the footpath in Stambridge from the village to the school and also for clearing the footpaths in Sutton Road, Rochford.

### **226 EAST AREA UPDATE**

The Committee received the East Area update.

#### **Item H21/09 – Footpath Scheme at Poynters Lane, Great Wakering from Wakering Road to Cupids Corner (Minute 247/09)**

Funding had been secured for the scheme; the County Council was currently in the process of trying to acquire the land at the right price.

#### **Item H2/10 – Enforcement of Parking Restrictions in Market Square from 7.00 am – 5.00 pm on Tuesdays (Minute 153/10)**

In response to continued concern about parking contraventions on Tuesday afternoons, officers advised that they would explore whether it might be possible for the Council's enforcement officers to be present at Market Square later on Tuesday afternoons and to clarify the position regarding a requirement for enforcement officers to give 5 minutes' notice before issuing a fixed penalty notice.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

Chairman .....

Date .....

### Appendix

#### Question

#### Response

J Bowker, Rochford

What is the Council's response to Colonnade's decision to apply for judicial review on the Government Inspector's decision to refuse plans to build on Coombes Farm?

The Council is aware that Colonnade has applied for an order under section 288(5) (b) Town & Country Planning Act 1990 to quash the decision made by the Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government (listed as the Defendant). The decision made by him was to dismiss the appeal against the Council's refusal to grant planning permission for residential development at Coombes Farm. We are listed on the claim form as an interested party; you may be assured that we shall monitor these proceedings with considerable interest.

J Bowker, Rochford

Accumulation of rubbish at Rochford station, particularly adjacent to the Southend-bound platform; rats have also been spotted. The Council has advised that National Rail is responsible for the land and therefore it is their problem. Yet National Rail is suggesting it is private land, perhaps belonging to the adjacent private property. What can the Council do to cut through this impasse, please?

We have asked our contractor to carry out an initial inspection of the area for rats and if there is an indication that there is an infestation Network Rail, the landowners, would be required to carry out treatment. With regard to the litter, this issue has been raised on a number of occasions previously and will now be investigated to establish whether any formal action is possible. An update will be provided at the next meeting.

### Question

B Efde, Great Wakering

Further to discussion at the last East Area Committee in June, we (the Essex Flood Forum) have contacted the Chairman of the Essex Resilience Forum, Gordon Hunter, about issues surrounding the Council's obligations under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

Upon examining the Act, we cannot see anywhere in the Act that says that the Council has no obligation to warn residents of the risk of flooding. Can the Council liaise with banks and insurers to request the reinstatement of the insurance protections that existed up to 2007 so that work can be carried out to protect residents' lives and homes?

### Response

It is not within the remit of the District Council to 'liaise with banks and insurers to request the reinstatement of the insurance protections that existed up to 2007 so that work can be carried out to protect residents' lives and homes'.

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places a duty on all Category 1 responders which includes Rochford District Council to:-

- Put in place arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection matters and maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency.
- Rochford District Council in conjunction with other Category 1 responders has plans in place to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency. The information set out below aims to provide an ongoing source of information to warn, inform and advise the public prior to an emergency taking place.

The risks to the public are set out in the Essex Resilience Forum community risk register, which includes an entry for flooding; this is available at: [http://microsites.essexcc.gov.uk/microsites/essex\\_resilience/crr.htm](http://microsites.essexcc.gov.uk/microsites/essex_resilience/crr.htm)

The Environment Agency is responsible for flood risk in England and Wales and Rochford District Council provides links to information through its website at: [http://www.rochford.gov.uk/community\\_people/emergencies/flooding.aspx](http://www.rochford.gov.uk/community_people/emergencies/flooding.aspx)

We would also encourage all households to sign up to the Environment Agency's flood line warnings direct service <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/floods/38289.aspx> or by calling 0845 988 1188.

### Question

### Response

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 for specific areas at risk defined by postcode. Areas at risk can be identified on the Environment Agency website.

The Environment Agency, in conjunction with the Association of British Insurers, has produced a flood risk and insurance information sheet at <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/floods/31654.aspx> in an attempt to answer questions from the public.

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