

Central Area Committee – 2 September 2010

Minutes of the meeting of the **Central Area Committee** held on **2 September 2010** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr Mrs L M Cox
Vice-Chairman: Cllr Mrs C A Weston

Cllr Mrs L A Butcher
Cllr M R Carter
Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn

Cllr M Hoy
Cllr M Maddocks
Cllr D G Stansby

ALSO PRESENT

Cllr Mrs M A Weir	- Hawkwell Parish Council
Cllr B Hazlewood	- Hockley Parish Council
Cllr Miss A Marriott	- Hullbridge Parish Council
Inspector A Parkman	- Essex Police
L Harvey	- Essex County Highways

OFFICERS PRESENT

R Evans	- Head of Environmental Services
N Khan	- Principal Solicitor
J Bostock	- Member Services Manager

215 AREA COMMITTEE – INITIAL BUSINESS

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs P A Capon, K H Hudson, J R F Mason and Mrs J E McPherson.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

216 COMMUNITY FORUM

Questions raised during the Community Forum and the responses given are set out in the Appendix to these minutes.

During discussion, Lyn Harvey confirmed that consideration was being given to concerns about a missing bus stop post and flag in Rectory Road in the vicinity of Sweyne Avenue. It was confirmed that the zebra crossing at the Budgens store in Lower Road, Hullbridge had been requested by the Parish Council and had been subject to a safety audit as part of localism considerations.

217 SPOTLIGHT ISSUES

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

Inspector Andy Parkman advised on the current position with regard to unadjusted but indicative figures as they related to crime reduction targets (for all types of crime) and anti-social behaviour targets for the entire Rochford District. With regard to the former, the Police were currently 2.4% below the cumulative target profile of 1,109.6. There was some concern at anti-social behaviour figures, which were currently 29.8% above the profile figure of 854 at 1,109. However, there had been favourable drops in both crime and anti-social behaviour statistics compared to the previous year for the Central Area.

The Police were working with the Community Safety Partnership on anti-social behaviour issues. There was liaison with registered social landlords in the context of problems caused by tenants and an ongoing concentration of officer resource on Friday and Saturday evenings. A specific operation was underway in relation to nuisance mopeds. The District Council's Portfolio Holder for Young Persons, Adult Services, Community Care and Wellbeing, Health and Community Safety, Cllr Mrs L A Butcher, advised that the Community Safety Partnership had set a target of reducing anti-social behaviour by 10% and was alert to hotspots within the District. If residents were aware of problems, they should contact the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator, David Sargant.

Responding to questions, Inspector Parkman advised that:-

- Incidents involving youths deliberately damaging car wing mirrors, riding cycles over vehicles and lifting drain covers could be seen as a mixture of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- There is no fixed policy as to when Neighbourhood Police Officers move on to other roles, such movement can be a reflection of service demands and individual developmental programmes.

A Member extended thanks to the Police for their work in addressing issues of anti-social behaviour by young persons in the Magnolia Road area of Hawkwell and their response to a road traffic incident on the previous Saturday in Ashingdon Road. Specific thanks were extended to Neighbourhood Police Officer, Steve Joynes, for his work.

(2) Update on Highways Localism and other Highways matters

Lyn Harvey tabled a schedule setting out the latest position on the programme of Highway works in the District for 2010/11 and priority schemes for implementation. It was noted that the footway from Newton Hall Gardens to Nanson Avenue, Ashingdon fell within the East Area of the District. It was also noted that a number of schemes would need to be the subject of temporary road closures.

With regard to future funding Lyn Harvey advised that, whilst a figure of £85,000 had been included in the budget for small schemes in the last financial year, the financial position was such that there would be no monies for this year. Where possible, monies for small schemes was being identified from other sources. Some work, such as the provision of vehicle activated signs, was undertaken via the rangers. Arrangements were in-hand for a meeting with the three Area Committee Chairmen, the District Council's Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation and the Head of Planning and Transportation to consider work prioritisation possibilities, with perhaps a main priority scheme being identified for each Area that could be commenced should the funding situation permit. The District as a whole would continue to benefit from community initiative funding. A potential option for consideration could be diversion of some of the monies within the budget for support rangers (£130,000) to other scheme/s.

Responding to questions, Lyn Harvey advised that:-

- The conditions of the footpaths at Hill Lane, Rayleigh could be inspected. In terms of weed control, the path at this location should be tackled in the next round later in the year. The Area Highways Office would be happy to know of any footpaths considered in poor condition. If a footpath is designated unsatisfactory, this does not mean that it is unsafe. In terms of holes, the intervention level is a depth of 20 millimetres. Other factors include leaning lampposts and signs.
- Notwithstanding the undertaking of appropriate consultation, any proposals to heighten the roundabout at Spa Road, Hockley would be the subject of a safety audit.
- Sites with high accident levels are investigated by the Highway Safety Team with improvements suggested for implementation as appropriate.
- The footpath by the cemetery in Hall Lane, Rochford had not been seen as a funding priority by the East Area Committee.
- Issues of speeding along White Hart Lane were currently being addressed by a vehicle activated sign, funded from localism.

During discussion thanks were extended to Lyn Harvey and her team for work undertaken to tackle issues of speeding at Watery Lane and problems with trees along Hullbridge Road.

218 CENTRAL AREA UPDATE

The Committee received the Central Area update.

Item 12/7 – Horse route on western side of Clements Hall

A suggestion that, in terms of strength and durability, a post and rail fence would be the most appropriate at this location would be given consideration by officers.

12/10 – Network Rail shrub clearance works at railway embankment adjacent to Magnolia Road

Hawkwell Parish Council’s concern that Network Rail had not undertaken the works that it had indicated had been completed would be considered by officers.

Item 14/10 – NHS South East Essex plans for capital investment within the Rochford District

The concern of a resident that statistics they had requested from the Primary Care Trust (PCT) in relation to practice based commissioning indicated that all investment was going to the Southend-on-Sea Borough Area was noted. It was also noted that there were indications that the PCT had announced a significant investment in the Westcliff area. Under the circumstances, it was agreed that the PCT should be asked for a more substantive response to this issue and invited to attend a future meeting of the Central Area Committee to address concerns raised.

The meeting closed at 8.49 pm.

Chairman

Date

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Appendix

Question	Response
<p>A James, Hockley</p> <p>Could RDC replace the seat that was located near the Skateboard ramp at Clements Hall? The concrete base which is partly overgrown is located about 3 metres north of a large oak tree that is about 10 metres north of the skateboard ramp.</p>	<p>There is considered to be a good provision of benches at Clements Hall and no other requests have been received in respect of this location. There is no budget provision for additional benches in the current financial year. Because of this location, a steel bench (costing £800 to install) would be required. On balance it is intended that no further action is taken in respect of this matter.</p>
<p>A James, Hockley</p> <p>Could RDC reinstate the new fence that runs at the side of the new section of bridle path at Clements Hall? I believe the reason it gets pulled over is that a gap is required for people to turn left at the entrance.</p>	<p>RDC is looking into re-instating the fence and planting a hedge along it. The idea of providing a gap is supported as this would discourage people from breaking through or climbing over the fence. It is intended that the works proceed on this basis.</p>
<p>A James, Hockley</p> <p>Why have RDC allowed a builder to temporary fence in part of the bridle path at the Clements Hall end of Park Gardens? The bridle path sign and footpath markers are now located within this fenced off area.</p>	<p>The temporary fence has been in place at this location for a protracted period. It is understood that Essex County Council has previously agreed the re-alignment of the bridleway. The bridleway is fully functional and of an adequate width, albeit that some of the markers may need to be repositioned. The Head of Environmental Services will take this matter forward with the Rights of Way Officer at Essex County Council.</p>
<p>E Short, Hawkwell</p> <p>Could the Council look at providing more allotments in the District. I believe there are none in Hawkwell.</p>	<p>Hawkwell Parish Council has been hoping to identify additional sites over the last two years, but land availability is the issue. The Parish Council's latest newsletter includes an item on this subject. It has been accepted practice that a Parish Council sets a higher charge for allotment users from outside the Parish for a number of years. Individuals could approach Hawkwell Parish Council direct with any concerns</p>

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Question	Response
	that they have.
<p>R Seward, Hullbridge</p> <p>Issues with vehicles double parking where there are parking restrictions in Windermere Avenue, Hullbridge. The night time and weekends are the busiest periods.</p>	<p>Given that this related to parking on both sides of the road, enforcement would be a matter for the Police unless Traffic Regulation Orders are in place. The introduction of Orders would be something that would need to be considered by the localism panel. Inspector Parkman would raise this matter with the neighbourhood Police team and it would be useful if photographs could be provided to Lyn Harvey. Separately, if the Fire Service was able to provide leaflets relating to its campaign on retaining access for emergency vehicles, Cllr Miss A Marriott would be happy to assist in distributing along the road in question.</p> <p>A related concern raised by Cllr M Hoy on issues of vehicles stopping outside the One Stop Shop in Hullbridge would be taken up by officers. If vehicles are in the 'zig zag' lines outside a shop, it is a matter for the Police, otherwise it would be a matter for District Council Parking Enforcement Officers.</p>
<p>B Guyett, Hockley</p> <p>Rochford District Council has diverted 460 allocations DPD responses from the clearly specified section TC9 to E10. Does the Committee agree that the Council can vary responses in this way?</p>	<p>The Committee noted that a complaint relating to this subject had been submitted by Mr Guyett to the Council and that a detailed response, in accordance with the Council's complaints procedure, had been issued. It was also noted that Mr Guyett had specific concerns about consistency in having been initially advised that representations could not be posted twice and then identifying that some representations had been posted twice but in the wrong location. The Council's Chief Executive could be asked if the matter could be looked at further. Mr Guyett had the opportunity to pursue the matter with the Local Government Ombudsman.</p>