

## Central Area Committee – 24 July 2007

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Minutes of the meeting of the **Central Area Committee** held on **24 July 2007** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr D G Stansby  
Vice-Chairman: Cllr Mrs C A Weston

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 M G B Starke  
Cllr J Thomass

### **ALSO PRESENT**

Cllr Mrs M J Webster - Executive Board Member for Leisure, Tourism and Heritage  
Cllr B Hazelwood - Hockley Parish Council  
Cllr Mrs M A Weir - Hawkwell Parish Council  
Cllr Miss A Marriott - Hullbridge Parish Council  
Cl J Walker - Essex Police  
L Harvey - County Highways

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

G Woolhouse - Corporate Director (External Services)  
A Bugeja - Head of Legal Services  
A Lovett - Environmental Street Scene Officer  
J Bostock - Principal Committee Administrator

## **261 AREA COMMITTEE – INITIAL BUSINESS**

### **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs M R Carter, J R F Mason and P R Robinson.

### **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## **262 COMMUNITY FORUM**

One request for information relating to youth facilities in Hawkwell and Hockley had been received in advance of the meeting and a document on this had been tabled. Two additional requests were submitted just prior to the start of this item – one on the provision being made for recreational facilities

for young people in Hawkwell and the surrounding area and one on why so many plans for flats are being passed in Hullbridge and how the infrastructure is going to cope with so many replacing one bungalow.

### **Flats in Hullbridge**

The Head of Legal Services advised that any proposals for residential development had to be considered in the context of the Council's policies, which set out clear parameters against which they are determined.

### **Youth Facilities**

During discussion of the questions on the provision of youth facilities it was noted that Parish Councils were seeking clarification of parameters in terms of what is allowed and any support available from the District Council. Activity to date pointed to the possibility that, if the District Council was agreeable, the Clements Hall Leisure Centre could be a location for a temporary portakabin type arrangement following which consideration could be given to a more permanent building at Clements Hall or, perhaps, at a factory unit location. Reference was made to the potential availability of some Parish monies for youth facility provision and to the possibility that local businesses could take an interest in the provision of, say, refreshments for a youth facility. It was noted that a facility provided for young people at Greensward School was not a youth club.

The Corporate Director (External Services) advised that officers would be willing to assist groups by advising on what may be deliverable. Advice can also be provided on whether a planning application is required. The Lead Officer contact would be the Council's Head of Community Services, Jeremy Bourne. The Corporate Director confirmed that officers would investigate the availability of a teen shelter that had been removed from another location.

It was recognised that, in developing proposals, there would be a need to be mindful of best value. The Chairman indicated that proposals would be something for consideration by the Council's Executive Board.

## **263 SPOTLIGHT ISSUES**

### **(1) Update on crime and disorder in Hawkwell, Hockley and Hullbridge**

#### **Neighbourhood Action Panels**

CI Walker circulated a document setting out the issues identified by the Neighbourhood Action Panel covering the Parishes within the Central Area. It was noted that the Panels comprised representatives of various areas of the community forming "key individual networks".

Matters that had been identified as local priorities in Hockley were speeding vehicles, general poor driving behaviour and youth nuisance. Matters that

had been identified in Hullbridge were youth nuisance in the park area, parking at Ferry Pharmacy, Ferry Road and speeding in Ferry Road, Pooles Lane and Lower Road.

CI Walker confirmed that the Police were aware of vehicular issues at Watery Lane.

### **Reported Crime April to June 2007**

CI Walker circulated a sheet on the basket of crimes for the April to June 2007 period. It was noted that the figures did not include Hawkwell North and South. It was also noted that this year had seen some reduction in the number of crimes reported, particularly in the area of criminal damage, and that separate figures were kept for anti-social behaviour. Whilst there had been some changes to the accounting methods associated with crime recording, the Chief Inspector's view was that incidents of anti-social behaviour were decreasing. The Chief Inspector indicated that, whilst it is likely there would always be an element of people who will not report crimes/have little or no confidence in the Police, the hope is that increased community policing will facilitate more people coming forward.

A Member wished to extend thanks to the Police for the increased presence in housing areas during the evening. Responding to questions on Watery Lane, Lyn Harvey advised that some road signs are being changed.

### **(2) Update on Highway Matters within Hawkwell, Hockley and Hullbridge**

It was noted that August would see highways work at Ferry Road/Watery Lane (with speeds down to 10 miles per hour) and the resurfacing of part of Southend Road in the vicinity of the Spa. There are planned Parish visits and the County was in the third year of its maintenance initiative plan.

Responding to questions, Lyn Harvey confirmed that it would be helpful if Parishes could respond quickly to audits and that:-

- Whilst consideration had been given to road narrowing at the end of Watery Lane, provision needs to be retained for larger vehicles to be able to turn around.
- Any highway excavation work requires permission from the statutory undertaker.
- Whilst there could be a check on the possibilities for relieving morning traffic congestion between Greensward School and Spa Road, account would need to be taken of the implications of ducting arrangements when considering any adjustments that may be possible to traffic signals. The provision of a filter light could be checked.

- The possibility of extending the white lines (or introducing studs) beyond the white lines already introduced near Bullwood Hall would be investigated.
- It was disappointing to hear that there had been concern about public health and safety whilst works were underway at the new Spa Shelter and Lyn Harvey would be grateful to receive any photographs or other evidence relating to this. Similarly, there would be concern if any area of damaged highway is left fenced but not addressed for a period of up to two months.
- The condition of the new 'Brays Lane' signs could be checked.

### **(3) Consultation on Tourism**

Cllr Mrs M J Webster, Executive Board Member for Leisure, Tourism and Heritage, emphasised that the District Council wanted to attract more people into the District and was working hard to highlight the history of the area. Specific reference was made to the variety of ancient churches. The District had already done much to celebrate St George's Day and further suggestions from the public would be welcomed. Celebrations to mark the centenary of the Battle of Ashingdon would provide an opportunity to attract tourism and any suggestions in this regard would also be welcomed.

Responding to questions, Cllr Mrs Webster advised that she would be pleased to hear from the Parishes on the support they consider appropriate in pursuing the introduction of a section of public footpath along the River Crouch so that it is again possible to walk between the Parishes.

Reference was made to the leisure opportunity represented by the Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park. A Parish Member wished to compliment the District on its tourism booklet.

## **264 CENTRAL AREA UPDATE**

The Committee received the Central Area Update.

Members concurred with the Chairman that it was pleasing to see the progress made on a refuse and recycling service for residents living in flats above the shops at Golden Cross, Hawkwell. Responding to questions, Alan Lovett advised that more publicity could be given to textile recycling. Councillor M G B Starke, Executive Board Member for the Environment, indicated that, in reviewing its recycling contract, the District Council was mindful of increasing the number of items that can be recycled and identifying options for managing situations where extra bins are introduced.

**265 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD/ISSUES TO REFER TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**

The Chairman confirmed that decisions on the way forward with regard to youth facilities would be for the Executive Board.

The meeting closed at 9.26pm.

Chairman .....

Date .....

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