

The **NUNEATON & BEDWORTH AREA COMMITTEE** met in the **CONFERENCE ROOM, ELIOT PARK INNOVATION CENTRE, 4 BARLING WAY, NUNEATON** on 24 May 2006

Present:

Councillor Barry Longden (in the Chair following election)

“ Kam Singh (Vice Chair following election)

“ John Burton

“ Richard Chattaway

“ Alan Farnell

“ John Haynes

“ Martin Heatley

“ Pat Henry

“ Bob Hicks

“ Mick Jones

“ Frank McCarney

“ John Ross

“ Sid Tooth

Officers:

Phil Astle, Education Officer, School Organisation, Children, Young People and Families.

Andrea Buckley, Performance and Development Directorate.

Jean Hardwick, Principal Committee Administrator, Performance and Development Directorate.

Peter Hatcher, County Education Co-ordinator, Adult, Health and Community Services.

Catherine Witham, Corporate Support Team Leader, Performance and Development Directorate.

Heather Shearer, Area Manager, Performance and Development Directorate.

John Scouller, Head of Skills, Tourism and Economy, Environment and Economy Directorate.

Chris Simpson, Regeneration and Project Engineer, Environment and Economy Directorate.

Pam Williams, Area Administrative Officer, Performance and Development Directorate.
Lee White, Project Manager-Major Public Transport Schemes, Environment and Economy Directorate.

1. General

(1) Election of Chair

Resolved that Councillor Barry Longden be appointed as Chair of the Committee.

(2) Appointment of Vice Chair

Resolved that Councillor Kam Singh be appointed as Vice Chair of the Committee.

(3) Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor June Tandy.

(4) Declarations of interest

Declarations of interest were recorded as follows -

- (a) Councillor Richard Chattaway – Prejudicial interest in item 8, Nuneaton and Bedworth Master Plan, because he was a Governor of King Edward VI College and a Trustee on the King Edward V1 Foundation. Councillor Chattaway left the room during discussion of this item.
- (b) Councillor Bob Hicks – Prejudicial interest in item 8, Nuneaton and Bedworth Master Plan because he was a Trustee on the King Edward VI College Foundation. Councillor Hicks left the room during discussion of this item.
- (c) Councillor Mick Jones – Personal interest in item 8 Nuneaton and Bedworth Master Plan, as a Governor of King Edward V1 College.
- (d) Councillors Pat Henry and John Ross declared personal interests relating to any item on the agenda by virtue of them serving as Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Councillors.
- (e) Councillor John Burton declared a personal interest because he was a Governor of St. Nicolas C of E Primary School.

(5) Minutes of the Meeting of 29 March 2006

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting of the Nuneaton and Bedworth Area Committee held on 29 March 2006 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record subject to the inclusion of Councillors John Burton and John Ross in the list of those present.

(6) Chair's correspondence and announcements

(a) 12 July 2006 – Extended Schools Area Conference

The Chair reminded the Committee of the invitation for them to attend the Extended Schools Area Conference on 12 July 2006.

(b) Parking Restrictions – Nuneaton and Bedworth Town Centres

The Chair asked for a report on revisions to waiting restrictions in Nuneaton and Bedworth town centres as a result of the decriminalisation of parking provision being deferred at the previous meeting.

John Scouller undertook to arrange for a report on this issue to be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.

2. Public Question Time

Mr. Alan Breed – Request for Bus Stop and Bus Lane at Nuneaton Railway Station

Mr. Breed thanked the Committee for considering his request for a Bus Stop and Bus Lane at the Nuneaton Railway Station. He reported that, following the last meeting, he had been told by the Stagecoach Bus Company's Co-ordinator that support had been withdrawn for his proposal. He thanked Members for supporting and considering his proposal.

PART A Non-Executive Functions

None

PART B Executive Functions

3. Change to Indicated Admission Number (IAN) – Nathaniel Newton Infant School.

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director for Children, Young People and Families.

Phil Astle invited Members to comments on the proposal to reduce the Indicated Admission Number of Nathaniel Newton Infant School in Hartshill, which he would forward to Cabinet. He referred to the plans, displayed at the meeting, which showed where pupils attending the school lived and the current priority areas.

During discussion the following comments were made in support of the proposal –

- the school had surplus places and the reduction would help address the current budget overspend;
- the reduction would assist the school in its long-term planning of finances and resources

Councillor John Haynes said that Councillor Richard Grant, County Councillor for the Hartshill Division, had asked that the existing admission numbers remained the same until the new Shires housing development had been finished and designated.

In reply to concerns Phil Astle -

- gave assurances that the proposal would allow children in the priority areas, and their siblings, to be accommodated in the school and would not eliminate parental choice.
- informed Members that the Shires housing development was complete.
- said that there was need to review the current priority areas and boundaries but this could not be undertaken until 2008 and would include designation of the Shires housing development.

Pamela Griffin, Head Teacher, Nathaniel Newton Infant School confirmed to Members that, if the school numbers were reduced, the pre-school and after-school clubs could be brought into the school and would make use of the vacant classrooms.

Resolved that Cabinet be informed that the Area Committee supports the revision of the Indicated Admission Numbers for Nathaniel Newton Infant School with effect from 2007, subject to Members' concerns being noted about the need to accommodate all children in the priority area and their siblings, and a review of the priority areas taking place in 2008.

4. Review of the Area Community Education Councils and future funding arrangements

Peter Hatcher presented the joint report of the Strategic Directors for Children, Young People and Families and Performance and Development.

The report sought the Area Committee's views on the attached draft report seeking Cabinet approval for the future arrangements for the funds, which ACECs allocated.

Members expressed support for the proposals provided that the grants to help small organisations were retained and monitored.

The Chair said that a process was needed to allocate the residue of the ACEC funding available to help community groups (approximately £6,000 for each area) and suggested that this issue should be referred to the Area Chairs' meeting for further consideration.

Resolved that the Area Committee recommends Cabinet -

- (1) That the funds referred to in para. 2.4 of the attached draft Cabinet paper (£32,000) be dispersed and promoted through the Community Development Fund with effect from April 2007, the resource to be allocated across the Area Committees using the formula of the Community Development Fund.
- (3) That the Area Committee Funding Sub-Group and Area Chairs consider the process and criteria for dispersing the remaining £32,000 (average £6,000 for each area) available for grants to community groups providing services to adults (paragraph 2.4 of the report to Cabinet 27 June 2006).

5. Nuneaton and Bedworth Area Business Plan.

Heather Shearer presented the report of the Strategic Director of Performance and Development, which advised on performance milestones as at the year-end.

Following discussion it was -

Resolved that the Area Committee –

- (1) note the progress made against milestone targets contained in the 2005/2006 Area Business Plan.
- (2) request a report to a future meeting on the red targets still outstanding or not achieved.

6. North-South Public Transport Corridor

Lee White presented the report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Economy. A number of public transport options for the Nuneaton to Leamington/Warwick corridor had been considered. The report outlined proposals and informed Members of an upcoming public consultation on one of the recommended options. The Area Committee was asked to record its views on the proposals and endorse consultation on them.

During discussion the following comments were noted –

- Experience of similar systems elsewhere in the country had been seen to be successful but very much depended on the funding and engineering works necessary to facilitate the creation of a bus transport corridor
- That the scheme would be welcomed and benefit those bus users wishing to travel across the county but could not do so currently because there was no through bus-route available.
- That the preferred option was a heavy rail-based system using existing routes linked up by new stations at strategic positions.

Councillor Martin Heatley reported that he had attended the Coventry meeting on 30 March 2006 and, whilst he was concerned that the freight link at the Ricoh Area was not being used, he considered that consultation was the way forward. He acknowledged the need for clarification about aspects of the scheme.

Concern was expressed about the preferred bus rapid transport option because –

- It included bus routes through Nuneaton and Bedworth town centres and dedicated bus lanes along the A444 and the Griff Roundabout, which Members said they would strongly opposed.
- There was insufficient detail for Members to support the proposed option.
- Of the revenue implications for the partner authorities who would be required to subsidise the scheme.

In response to Members' concerns Lee White said that the economic viability of the scheme would be jeopardised if there were not support for a dedicated bus lane. The vehicle could run on normal roads but whether that provided value for money would need to be assessed.

Resolved that the Area Committee –

- (1) Asks that its views on the concept of the Bus Rapid Transit option be noted.
- (2) Participates in the public consultation process and the possible development of a funding bid to central government.
- (3) Supports the heavy-rail based option for the north-south transport corridor.

7. Highways Maintenance Plan 2006/2007 and Five Year List of Structural Maintenance Schemes

Resolved, having considered the report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Economy, that Cabinet be informed that the Area Committee -

- (1) Agrees the Highway Maintenance Plan 2006/2007 and the Five-Year List of Structural Maintenance Schemes.
- (2) Approves the programme of road maintenance schemes funded from the additional £300,000 capital sum (reported to the March Committee).

8. Nuneaton and Bedworth Masterplan – Member Consideration of Implementation Strategy.

(Councillors Richard Chattaway and Bob Hicks left the room during discussion of this item).

Chris Simpson presented the report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Economy.

The report summarised progress made on the implementation strategy of the Nuneaton and Bedworth Masterplan. It asked Members to approve the earmarking of capital receipts towards delivery of the Masterplan. Also for Member support for the work to examine the impact of the possible relocation of North Warwickshire and Hinckley College and King Edward VI College to Nuneaton town centre

During discussion Members expressed the following concerns that -

- the Committee had not been consulted on the proposal to relocate the two Colleges into the town centre
- the Committee only knew of the proposal by articles in the local newspapers.
- the proposals would impact on the Town Centre Master Plans, which the Committee had recently agreed.
- combining the two Colleges on one site in the town centre would have a detrimental impact on the town centre.

Councillor Mick Jones in support of the proposal, referred to the outcome of a recent Inspection of King Edward VI College, and the need for it to update its image, and of pressure from the LSC for the two Colleges to move to a single site. He suggested that a site in the town centre site would make access easier for students who currently needed transport to get from the town centre to the North Warwickshire and Hinckley College.

Councillor John Burton suggested that the new proposals could be an exciting concept but expressed concern that Members had not been briefed on the issues and had only learned about the proposal through the newspapers. He also expressed concern about the impact of the proposal on the infrastructure of the town centre, the increased pressure on car parking provision (when the current aim was to reduce traffic in the town centre), the size of the new building that would be required to accommodate the two Colleges, and the future of the King Edward V1 school building which was a Grade 1 Listed building.

Councillor Mick Jones, seconded by Councillor Alan Farnell, moved -

“That the Committee agree recommendations (1) and (2) of the report, subject to the deletion of the words “and subject to there being significant benefits to the town centre, support in principle their relocation.” from the end of recommendation (2).

The Chair moved an amendment that recommendation (2) be deleted completely and, with 2 Members voting in favour, the majority of Members voting against, the motion was lost and it was -

Resolved that the Area Committee:

- (1) Recommend that Cabinet agree that all funds raised by the sale of Warwickshire County Council (WCC) land will be earmarked in order to help deliver the Masterplan and ensure WCC’s influence on future development.
- (2) Support continued working with North Warwickshire and Hinckley College and King Edward VI College to examine the impact of their relocation within Nuneaton town centre.

(Councillor Richard Chattaway and Bob Hicks returned to the meeting.)

9. Future Agenda Items

Resolved, having considered the report of the Strategic Director of Performance and Development, that the Area Committee note the proposed agenda items for future meetings subject to the inclusion of the following item –

Acute Services Review (A & E, Paediatric and Cancer Services).

10. Any Other Business

Funding of Projects to address the Nuneaton and Bedworth Community Plan

At the Area Committee meeting on 28 September 2005 it was agreed to match fund Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council £20,000 to support projects delivering objectives in the Nuneaton and Bedworth Community Plan. The Chair reported that an additional £4,080 was needed to support all the projects that the Community Panel, (made up of older and younger residents), wished to fund and requested the Area Committee to agree to provide half the additional funding from its Well-being Fund.

Resolved that the Area Committee agree to fund half of the additional funding required by the Community Panel by allocating £2,040, from the Nuneaton and Bedworth Well-being Fund.

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Chair of the Committee

The Committee rose at 8:35 p.m.