

The **NUNEATON & BEDWORTH AREA COMMITTEE** met
in the **CONFERENCE ROOM, ELIOT PARK INNOVATION
CENTRE, 4 BARLING WAY, NUNEATON** on 25 July 2007

Present:

Councillor	Barry Longden (Chair)
“	John Burton
“	Richard Chattaway
“	Alan Farnell
“	John Haynes
“	Martin Heatley
“	Pat Henry
“	Bob Hicks
“	Mick Jones
“	Frank McCarney
“	John Ross
“	June Tandy
“	Sid Tooth

Officers:

Andrea Buckley, Community Partnership Officer, Performance and Development Directorate
Alison Hallworth, Adult and Community Team Leader, Performance and Development Directorate
Jean Hardwick, Principal Committee Administrator, Performance and Development Directorate
Nick Gower-Johnson, County Partnership Manager, Performance and Development Directorate.
Peter Samwell, County Highways Project Manager, Environment and Economy Directorate
John Scouller, Head of Skills, Tourism and Economy, Environment and Economy Directorate
Heather Shearer, Area Manager, Performance and Development Directorate
Pam Williams, Area Administrative Officer, Performance and Development Directorate

Also in Attendance: Mr. Alan Breed, Mr. Terry Spicer and another member of the public and 1 press representative from the Heartland Evening News

1. General

(1) Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Kam Singh (Vice Chair).

(2) Declarations of interest

Councillor Martin Heatley declared a personal interest in agenda item 2, Footbridge off Celandine Way, because he farmed land belonging to the landowner.

(3) Minutes of the Meeting of 23 May 2007 and Matters Arising

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting of the Nuneaton and Bedworth Area Committee meeting held on 23 May 2007 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

Minutes of the Special Meeting of 10 July 2007 – Nuneaton and Bedworth Master Plan

In reply to a question Members were informed that the minutes of the special meeting held on 10 July 2007 had not been circulated with the current agenda papers. The Chair asked that a copy of the draft minutes of this meeting be circulated to all Members and undertook to hold a special meeting to consider them if Members so wished.

Matters Arising

None

(4) Chair's correspondence and announcements

(1) Special informal meeting – Delegated budget

The Chair reported that a special meeting would need to be convened to consider how the delegated budget should be allocated.

Heather Shearer undertook to contact Members to arrange a date for this special meeting.

(2) Letter from Mr. Bates - Weddington Road Cycle Lane

The Chair reported a letter received from a Mr. Bates commenting on the Weddington Road Cycle Lane. The scheme had, however, already been agreed.

(3) Funding Sub-Group – Grant for Teenage Pregnancy Group

The Chair asked the Committee to approve an, in principle, request for a grant of £30 to support the Teenage Pregnancy Group. He asked Members to approve this request in advance of a joint report,

from Heather Shearer and Amy Barnes, to the Committee's September meeting.

Councillor John Burton spoke in support of the request and added that this project would be further supported by a grant of £20,000 from the Borough Council Leisure Trust. The purpose of the grant would be to fund two outreach/support officer posts.

The Area Committee agreed, in principle, to a grant of £30,000 being made to the Teenage Pregnancy Group and noted that a report would be brought to the Committee's September meeting formalising this request.

2. Footbridge off Celandine Way, Bedworth

John Scouller presented the report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Economy about the footbridge off Celandine Way.

The report outlined that the ownership and maintenance liability of the structure were currently in dispute. However, surveys had been undertaken to determine what remedial works were required.

The surveys had determined that although less than pleasing to the eye, the structure was more than adequate for pedestrian use. It was, therefore, recommended that remedial works should be confined to replacing the surface of the bridge. The new surface would connect to the existing metalled paths each side of the bridge.

During discussion the following comments were noted -

- (1) That the bridge was sound and that it only required painting, the vandalised buttresses replaced and resurfacing undertaken. Additionally, there was sufficient funding in the bridge maintenance budget to enable this work to be carried out.
- (2) That the ownership of the bridge needed to be determined.
- (3) That technical advice should be obtained about replacing the buttresses and to ascertain what this would cost and the position of the bridge maintenance budget.

Following further discussion Councillor June Tandy, seconded by Councillor Richard Chattaway, moved and it was –

Resolved that the report be deferred to enable the safety of the bridge to be determined, in connection with the replacement of the missing buttresses, an estimate of the cost of replacing the buttresses, together with details of the status of the bridge maintenance budget.

3. Proposed One Way Order - Riversley Road, Nuneaton

John Scouller presented the report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Economy.

He outlined that, following formal advertisement of a proposed one-way order for Riversley Road, Nuneaton, one objection had been received. The report considered the objection and recommended that the one-way order be implemented as advertised.

Councillor June Tandy recommended that the proposal be supported and said that she had consulted residents in Riversley Road, Dugdale Street and Princess Street who had expressed overwhelming support for Riversley Road becoming one way for traffic. She appreciated the objection received and was well aware of the difficulties that had been experienced along Riversley Road but supported the proposal as recommended in the report.

Resolved that the proposal to make Riversley Road one way from its junction with Edward Street to Coton Road is implemented as advertised.

Mr. Terry Spicer, a resident of Riversley Road, asked Members to consider speed humps, as an addition to the one-way order, to slow down the speed of vehicles. The Chair advised that this could not be included in the current proposal and would need separate, further, consideration.

4. Street Lighting Hours of Operation - Consultation

Peter Samwell presented the report of the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy.

He outlined that, at present, virtually all County Council street lights in Warwickshire operated throughout the night and that savings might be made if all (or selected) lights were switched off after midnight. The Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee requested a consultation before further consideration was given to this issue. This report requested the views of Members of the Area Committee to switching off or dimming street lights.

During discussion the following comments were noted –

- (1) The majority view was this proposal should not be supported because of the health and safety implications and Members did not want a trial in their areas.
- (2) That Members had spent many years improving the lighting in their areas and that this proposal would be a retrograde step.

- (3) That trials in rural areas might be acceptable but not in urban areas.
- (4) That comments from the Police on this proposal would be welcomed.

Resolved to note that the Area Committee does not wish any action to be taken with regard to the proposal to switch off streetlights after midnight (or dim lights) in the Nuneaton and Bedworth areas.

5. Proposed Off Street Parking Places Order - Nuneaton & Bedworth

John Scouller presented the report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Economy

He outlined that the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council was proposing to incorporate some additional car parks and delete some others by making a new Off Street Parking Order 2007 and revoking the 2005 Order. Under s.39 (3) of the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984, the Borough Council required consent from the County Council for the proposed changes.

A Member said he could not support the proposal to charge for car parking on the Pingles Leisure Centre car park which he considered to be petty and a "stealth tax".

Resolved, one Member voting against, that the Area Committee endorses Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council's proposal to make the Borough of Nuneaton and Bedworth (Off Street Parking Places) Order 2007 and revoke the 2005 Order.

6. Responsive Services and Empowered Communities – The Development of a Locality Approach

Nick Gower-Johnson presented the report of the Strategic Director of Performance and Development

He highlighted that the report followed on from the decision of the Cabinet on 10th May 2007 authorising consultation with elected members through the Area Committees on the principles and issues relating to the development of a Locality approach by the Council.

During discussion the following comments were noted –

- (1) A wide range of community groups, including the Area Committee, PACTS and Residents Associations already existed in the area and to introduce another level of local government would confuse the public.
- (2) That there was the need for evidence to support the proposal and for evidence that locality working would improve services.
- (3) That Nuneaton and Bedworth were unique in that they did not have parish or town councils.

- (4) That the locality map options and the division of the area was unworkable alongside existing Member commitments to attend PACT and similar meetings
- (5) The need to link the work of Locality Fora with that of the Area Committee and the Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP) and the potential to create tension between those groups was highlighted as areas of concern.
- (6) That the potential, for the future, of giving power to individual members was questioned.
- (7) With the reservations expressed Option 1 was supported with retention of the Area Committee.
- (8) That the proposals were considered more appropriate for an area such as Birmingham where there were areas of dense population.
- (9) That the administrative costs associated with creating five locality areas was of concern.
- (10) That the public appreciated the work of the Area Committee and were familiar with how it operated but, nevertheless, was not generally well attended by members of the public.

Further discussion followed during which Members commented on the success of PACT meetings and the importance of closer partnership working with all public sector providers.

In response –

- (1) Heather Shearer suggested that trials of locality working based in areas where PACT meetings worked well might be a possible way forward and investigated.
- (2) Nick Gower-Johnson suggested that the proposals outlined in the report were not the only options available and that a unique solution could be sought for Nuneaton and Bedworth that met the needs of that area and set out the specific benefits for local people and taking account of Members comments and concerns.

Resolved that the Area Committee agrees that –

- (1) These proposals, as outlined in the report, are not suitable for Nuneaton and Bedworth and it requires further investigation to develop a unique Nuneaton and Bedworth solution based around PACTS.
- (2) Cabinet, at its meeting on 18th October, 2007 be informed of this view.
- (3) An informal meeting of the Area Committee be convened as soon as possible in order to consider the matter further and to develop a suitable option.

7. Future Agenda Items

Resolved, having considered the report of the Strategic Director of Performance and Development, that the Area Committee agrees the schedule of reports at future meeting as indicated, subject to the inclusion of a report to a future meeting to discuss the briefing paper presented to the Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 24 July 2007 relating to economic development in the Nuneaton and Bedworth area.

8. Any Other Business

There were no items of urgent business.

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Chair of the Committee

The Committee rose at 7:25 p.m.