

The **NUNEATON & BEDWORTH AREA COMMITTEE** met
in the **CONFERENCE ROOM, ELIOT PARK INNOVATION
CENTRE, 4 BARLING WAY, NUNEATON** on 26 September
2007

Present:

Councillor	Barry Longden (Chair)
“	John Burton
“	Richard Chattaway
“	Alan Farnell
“	Pat Henry
“	Mick Jones
“	Frank McCarney
“	John Ross
“	Kam Singh
“	June Tandy
“	Sid Tooth

Officers:

Tim Bowtell, Policy Engineer, County Highways Policy
Transport and Highways, Environment and Economy
Directorate.

Andrea Buckley, Community Partnership Officer, Performance
and Development Directorate.

John Deegan, Strategic Director of Environment and Economy.

Alison Hallworth, Adult and Community Team Leader,
Performance and Development Directorate.

Jean Hardwick, Principal Committee Administrator,
Performance and Development Directorate

Peter Samwell, County Highways Project Manager,
Environment and Economy Directorate

Heather Shearer, Area Manager, Performance and
Development Directorate

1. General

(1) Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Haynes, Martin
Heatley and Bob Hicks.

(2) Declarations of interest

None.

(3) (a) Minutes of the Meetings of 10 and 25 July 2007 and Matters Arising

Resolved that the minutes of the meetings of the Nuneaton and Bedworth Area Committee held on 10 and 25 July 2007 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

(b) Matters Arising

Minutes of the meeting 25 July 2007 – item 2 Footbridge off Celandine Way

In reply to a question the Chair said he had nothing to report on the progress of this issue.

(4) Chair's correspondence and announcements

(1) Capital Funding – Delegated Budget

The Chair asked for Committee approval to split the £40k delegated budget into £20k for street lighting and £20k for the Area Highways Team as had been agreed the previous year. The Committee supported this proposal.

(2) Traffic Warden – funding

The Chair asked for agreement, in principle, of retaining the Traffic Warden for a further 12 months and funding half the cost of the post from the Well-being fund in partnership with the Borough Council. The Committee referred to the good work carried out by the Warden and supported this proposal. A report to the next meeting was requested on the status of the funding contribution from the Borough Council.

(3) School Crossing Patrol

The Chair reported that Home Office approval had been received for the purchase of a head cam and video for the school crossing patrol. Following discussions the Police had agreed that, if the video evidence was good enough, they would prosecute offenders. It was unlikely, however, that the equipment would be available before Christmas.

(4) Families Against Knives Group

The Chair reported that there had been a great deal of development work around the creation of a DVD to use in Schools but there were unresolved issues around copyright and the Group would be seeking funding for the DVD through another route.

(5) Report back from the Area Chairs' meeting

(a) Arts for Health Projects

£10k had been allocated to each area for Art for Health projects. Projects were being worked up centrally and progress would be reported to the next meeting.

(b) Allocation of £6k (from the former ACEC funds) and £6k SIF funding

Direction was requested about how the above sums should be spent. The current proposals included a project to be worked up to address nuisance motorcyclists and nuisance youths. Other suggestions from Members would be welcomed.

(c) Youth Development Fund

The administration of the Youth Work Development grants by the Children, Young People and Families Directorate would be reviewed regularly.

(d) Community Computers Scheme -28 September 2007 deadline

Limited requests had been received from community groups to take advantage of the free computer scheme. Andrea Buckley explained that, only two requests for computers had received, and the deadline had been extended. She would report on the up to date position to the October meeting of the Funding Sub Group.

(e) Localities Working

The report on Localities Working would be reported to Cabinet and this would include the Area Committees' comments.

(f) Well-being and Social Inclusion Fund

These funds were being reviewed by SDMT in October and a draft report would be circulated Members.

(6) EPIC

All units in the EPIC building were now let and this would mean that the Area Committee would need to find another location for its meetings. Members said that they were pleased that all units had been let and that a press statement should be issued advertising this excellent news.

(7) Resignation of Heather Shearer and appointment of new Area Manager, Peter Hunter.

The resignation of Heather Shearer as from the 12 October 2007 was reported and Peter Hunter, Warwick Area Manager, who would take her place, was welcomed to the meeting.

3. Nuneaton and Bedworth County Highways Area office and Depot

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Economy, which set out the current position and actions being taken to establish a permanent County Highways Area Office and Depot within the Nuneaton and Bedworth area.

During discussion the following comments were noted –

- (1) Siting the Highways Area Office together with the depot was considered to be not so convenient for members as compared to a location closer to Nuneaton and Bedworth Town Centres, where Members could speak directly to staff.
- (2) Concern was expressed about the potential traffic hazards and dangers associated with Area Office staff accessing and egressing the site office onto and off the roundabout.
- (3) That petrol fumes and noise from traffic were also a potential health hazard for staff at the site office.

In response to Members' comments Peter Samwell and John Deegan –

- (1) explained the efficiency benefits of locating the client and contractor functions together which would enable close working contact with the contractor and was more cost effective than providing separate premises.
- (2) said that a safety audit of the site had been undertaken. The concern about staff accessing the site had been addressed by means of "tweaking" the traffic lights sequence to give a longer red phase to ensure safe access and egress from the site.
- (3) acknowledged that pollution was an issue that was being assessed.

Resolved that the Area Committee endorses the actions being taken to relocate the Area Office at Junction 3 of the M6, and to develop a works depot at this site subject to satisfactory health and environment testing to ensure staff safety being undertaken and a feasibility study on an additional light phase for access and egress purpose onto the site.

3. Nuneaton and Bedworth Social Inclusion Funding 2006/07 and 2007/08

Resolved, having considered the report of the Strategic Director for Performance and Development, on the Funding Sub Group recommendations, that the Area Committee –

(1) Approves funding the CreDability Key Computer Friends project to the value of £13,169 from the 2006/7 Social Inclusion Fund.

(2) Approves funding for Young Persons Sexual Health Workers Project to the value of £30,000 (balance of 2006/07 Social Inclusion Fund - £17,000 and the remainder - £13,000 funded from the 2007/08 Social Inclusion Fund.

4. Nuneaton and Bedworth Well-being Fund Commissions

Resolved that, having considered the report of the Strategic Director for Performance and Development, that the Area Committee accept the recommendation of the Funding Sub Group to: Commission another annual round of jointly-funded, local projects to meet the Sustainable Community plan actions contained in "Shaping Our Future 2007 -21, by contributing £40,000 of Well-being Funds to match-fund a joint process with Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council.

5. 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 meetings as indicated.

7. Any Other Business

The Chair agreed to consideration of the following two item as urgent business on the grounds that –

(1) the Nuneaton and Bedworth Town Centres Partnership Board was meeting the following day.

(2) this was the last Area Committee meeting attended by Heather Shearer, the Area Manager, following her notice of resignation.

8. County Council Representation on Nuneaton and Bedworth Town Centres Partnership Board (The Board)

Heather Shearer reported that the Board had reduced the number of County Council representatives from four to two because it was considered that the number of elected members was out of proportion with the business community representatives, and as a means of attracting more business

representation onto the Board. The Centre Manager had informed her that the Board was meeting the following day and had asked to be notified of the names of the County Council representatives.

Discussion followed during which -

- (1) strong opposition was expressed about the decision made by the Board to reduce County Council representation and was against Members' wishes and without consultation with the County Council. It was proposed that the Board should be asked to rescind its decision.
- (2) The benefit of continuing County Council representation on the Board was important to ensure that the interests of both Nuneaton and Bedworth Town Centres were adequately represented.

John Deegan suggested that representatives of the Area Committee and the Board should meet to discuss this issue and offered his Town Centre Management staff to help broker an agreement.

Resolved that the –

- (1) Chair of the Area Committee be asked to hold discussions with a representative of the Nuneaton and Bedworth Town Centres Management Board to ask that the Board reconsider its decision to reduce the number of County Council representatives on the Board from 4 to 2.
- (2) Offer made by John Deegan to ask his Town Centre Staff to help broker an agreement be noted.

9. Resignation of Heather Shearer, Area Manager – Thanks and Best Wishes

The Chair reported that Heather Shearer would be leaving the Council on 12 October 2007 having worked as Area Manager from 4th October 1999. He commended Heather's work for the Area Committee and personally, for him, as Chair of the Committee. She had been responsible for pulling together the Area Committee at its inception and her guidance, professionalism and calibre of person had steered the Committee in the right direction and enabled many things to be achieved in the area. Heather had been an excellent advocate for the County Council, together with her support team.

The Committee asked that its sincere thanks be recorded for the excellent work that Heather has done over a long period of time and wished her well for the future.

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Chair of the Committee

The Committee rose at 7:05 p.m.