

12th July 2007

Minutes of the meeting of the **RUGBY AREA COMMITTEE** held at the **TOWN HALL, RUGBY** on the **12 July 2007**

Present: -

Councillor John Vereker (Chair)
“ Tom Cavanagh
“ Gordon Collett
“ Richard Dodd
“ Katherine King
“ Brian Levy
“ Phillip Morris-Jones
“ Jerry Roodhouse
“ Ian Smith
“ Heather Timms (Vice Chair)

Officers:

Roger Bennett, Traffic Projects Group
Hannah Cramp, Community Partnership Officer
Nick Darwen, Rugby Area Manager
Grace Elford, Community Partnership Officer
Peter Endall, Senior Solicitor
Nick Gower Johnson, County Partnership Manager
Jean Hardwick, Principal Committee Administrator
Jo Ingle, Project Manager – Waste Management
Roger Newham, Head of Transport Planning
Peter Samwell - Policy Manager, E&E

Also Attended:-

Councillor Tony Gillias, Councillor Robin Hazelton and 2 Members of the public (approx).

1. General

(1) Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor John Wells.

(2) Members' Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

Members declared personal/prejudicial interests as follows –

- (1) Councillors Richard Dodd, Jerry Roodhouse and Heather Timms declared personal interests by virtue of them serving as Rugby

Borough Councillors.

- (2) Councillor Katherine King declared a prejudicial interest as a Governor of Bishop Wulstan Catholic School (minute 5 of the meeting held on 24th May 2007) and a personal interest in connection with the Citizens Advice Bureau, agenda item 7, Funding Sub-Group.
- (3) Councillor John Vereker declared a personal interest in connection with item 7, Funding Sub-Group. Overslade Community Association,
- (4) Councillor Heather Timms declared a personal interest in connection with item 7, Funding Sub-Group. Warwickshire Rural Community Council.

(3) Minutes of the Meetings held on the 24 May 2007 and Matters Arising

(i) Minutes

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Rugby Area Committee held on the 24 May 2007 be approved and signed by the Chair.

(ii) Matters Arising

Nil.

2. Public Question Time

Question 1 – Councillor Chris Warburton

Maintenance and Safety Funding Allocation

Shilton Parish Council would like to know why no information has been passed to them regarding the availability of the above fund, which it is understood stands in the region of £400k.

Response from Roger Newham, Environment and Economy Directorate

The £400K Maintenance & Safety Funding was put forward for consideration by WCC Elected Members at a seminar on the 24th May. At this meeting two large-scale safety schemes were proposed and Members were also asked to consider any other suggestions they may have for the remainder of the budget. Some Members requested that they therefore be given opportunity to canvass their parishes for suggested schemes. As a result, it was agreed that a further informal

meeting be held on 12 July to A) discuss costings for the two proposed safety schemes and B) so that all Members had opportunity to make proposals for the remainder of the budget.

We appreciate that the deadline we had to give was a short one, however this was to ensure that we could get a written report to Members before the 12th July meeting.

Question 2 – Councillor Tony Gillias – Rugby Borough Council

Issues surrounding the movements of HGV from the motorway network onto our rural 'B' roads to Magna Park are proving to be on the increase.

The Freight Quality Partnership route map does not appear to have any real effect to direct HGVs away from the villages. Residents in Ansty and Shilton are reporting up to 400 HGV movements per day including Saturday. This volume, even if it were a 100 per day is just not acceptable, considering the narrowness and tight bends through our traditional villages with homes abutting the edge of the road. It is only a matter of time before serious accidents and deaths occur. Now that there are so many foreign HGV on our roads and that a government survey found that over 50% of these HGV were not safe to be driven because of one fault or another. This is extremely disturbing for residents of roadside cottages, for it could be that that if brakes may fail on a Heavy Goods Vehicle, whilst negotiating tight bends in a village, then loss of life and home will almost certainly occur.

There is a growing feeling that a weight restriction is the only answer through the Fosse villages in order to force HGV onto the designated sensible routes.

Way back in February 2006 Mark Porter agreed (on a site visit) that signage to and from Magna Park was 'inappropriate'. Yet 18 months down the road no improvements have been noted.

From the M6 at Coventry, both north and southbound, there are brown signs pointing the way to ' Coventry's Heritage' and Coombe Abbey', but, for the largest warehousing network in Europe, there is absolutely NOTHING. This is beyond belief. What will be done to solve this issue and when?

Response from Roger Newham, Environment and Economy Directorate

Historically this has been an issue of drivers leaving Magna Park and using the B road network rather than the A5. The signing on the A5 / A4303 was highlighted as an issue and this was raised with the Highways Agency contractor Optima. We have contacted them on a number of occasions with the sign designs necessary but have heard nothing in response. I will continue to request a change in the current signing and if I continue to get no action will try to come to an arrangement with Optima to allow Warwickshire County Council to replace the signs.

The increase in lorry traffic could be down to an increase in the use of Sat Nav systems, which is an issue we are dealing with on a County wide scale. If you would like further information on this matter please contact Mark Porter -

Warwickshire County Council Traffic Group.

Councillor Tony Gillies expressed concern that the matter was no further forward and stressed that Magna Park was the biggest park in Europe and lorries needed to be directed away from the Fosse Villages.

Roger Newhan said that he could not recommend signing of the Park from junction 2 of the motorway as this was too far away from the Park. Additionally he was trying to persuade the Partnership Company to deal with operators who took the wrong routes. He suggested that Councillor Gillies should contact his Member of Parliament and ask him to make representation to the Secretary of State for Transport about this issue.

Question 3 – Councillor Tony Gillias – Rugby Borough Council

The recent death on the A5 at Wibtoft has also highlighted a need for action. This is a very dangerous road that bottlenecks at the village from dual carriageway to single carriageway in both directions. This would be the ideal location for a speed camera before yet another death occurs. Because of the vast increase in traffic flow to Magna Park and Dirft along this stretch of road this is a black spot that will only get worse. What action will be taken to rectify this serious situation and when?

Response from Carolyn Burrows, Environment and Economy Directorate

The A5 at Wibtoft is in Leicestershire and is a trunk road, which falls under the responsibility of the Highways Agency.

We understand that Leicestershire Safety Camera Partnership is actively looking to carry out mobile camera enforcement on the A5 at Wibtoft. However, there are some technical difficulties to address before enforcement can begin.

Question 4 (Late Submission) – Councillor Neil Sanderson (on behalf of Sustainable Rugby).

1. It is unclear what facilities WCC and or its Contractor will be providing during the temporary closure of Hunters Lane Transfer Station

What facilities will be available during the closure period both on and off site?
Will there be a public information campaign prior to the commencement of the works?

Has the county taken into account the possible knock-on effects for Rugby Borough Council's household collection service.

2. It is likely Warwickshire County Council could face fines estimated at 22 million pounds should it fail to significantly reduce its bio-degradable waste to landfill

What is the timetable for introducing facilities like anaerobic digestion,

composting, and Mechanical and biological treatment facilities to reduce biodegradable waste to landfill in the County and specifically in the Rugby area?

A full written response will be circulated after the meeting.

3. Temporary Arrangements for Public Recycling Facilities in Rugby - Winter 2007/08

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Economy, which summarised responses to the issues arising as a result of the Hunters Lane Household Waste Recycling Centre refurbishment.

During discussion the following comments were noted –

- (1) That the proposals would only be supported if they were accompanied by a temporary speed restriction along the approach road to the Stockton site.
- (2) That a temporary 30 m.p.h speed limit would be the preferred restriction, or alternatively a 40 m.p.h restriction reducing to 30 m.p.h at the site entrance.
- (3) That Members and the community should be kept fully informed of what was happening, the timescale of events, a telephone helpline/contact number set up by the County Council and the Borough Council and publicised, and an information-briefing sheet produced (based on the information contained in the report) compiled.
- (4) That access to and from the site would be safer if the grass verges were cut back to allow a greater visibility splay.
- (5) That consideration should be given to the centres accepting car tyres (private not commercial disposal).

The Chair invited Councillor Robin Hazelton, local Member responsible for the area, to address the Committee. Councillor Hazelton expressed great concern about public safety in connection with access into and out of the Stockton site particularly if the numbers of people using the site increased.

In reply to Members comments and concern Jo Ingle –

- (1) said that she would give consideration to Members' suggestions.
- (2) confirmed that the existing public contact number for Waste Management would be advertised at all sites and on the website.
- (3) said that the staff managing the centres were well trained on how to deal with the public and difficult situation.

Roger Newham said that the suggested temporary speed restrictions would need to be properly evaluated and that he would contact Members to obtain their views before any measures were introduced.

Resolved that the temporary arrangements described in this report to replace the Hunters Lane Recycling Centre, whilst it is closed, are approved subject to the officers carrying an evaluation of the most appropriate temporary speed restrictions on the access road to the Stockton site, taking account of Members' comments.

4. Street Lighting Hours of Operation – Consultation.

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Economy, which outlined that, at present, virtually all streetlights in Warwickshire operated throughout the night. 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 requests the views of Members of the Area Committee to switching off or dimming streetlights.

During discussion the following comments were noted –

- (1) That Warwickshire had a high accident rate involving motorcyclists and a high "fear of crime" and that switching off lights could not be supported.
- (2) That dimming or switching off of light on trunk roads could be supported and specific areas trialled.
- (3) That the Police's view should be sought on the proposal.
- (4) That a cost analysis of the savings resulting from dimming of lights would be helpful. Any savings made by dimming lights should be invested back into street light improvements and energy efficiency lights should be installed wherever possible.
- (5) That dimming of lights in the rural areas, subject to the support of the parish council, would be acceptable but not in the urban areas.

Peter Samwell said he would report Members' views to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee and undertook to circulate details of cost savings of dimming lights. Additionally he undertook to contact other authorities that had trialled some aspects of the proposals and would feedback their response to Members.

Resolved that Members' views on the switching off of lights in their area in the early hours of the morning or lights being dimmed be reported to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

5. 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, which 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. He highlighted the four main issues as follows –

- The principle of locality working
- The boundary options for locality working
- The role of Members of the Forums
- The role and powers of the Forums.

During discussion Members comments were noted as follows –

- (1) In terms of geographical boundaries, all Members who spoke favoured Map Option 1, although it was considered that some of the exact boundaries, particularly between Rugby Town West and Ease might need to be explored further.
- (2) Support was expressed for options 1 and 2 governance options, with the majority of Members favouring option 1.
- (3) Support was expressed for continuation of both Area Committees and the rural Electoral Divisional Panels.
- (4) Some Members expressed the view that the continuous re-branding of local meetings might further confuse and disengage the public.

Resolved that the Area Committee asks that Cabinet on 18th October 2007 be informed that it supports Locality Option map 1 and Governance option 1.

6. Electoral Division Panels

Resolved, that the report of the Strategic Director for Performance and Development which provides an update on actions agreed at recent Electoral Divisional Panels, and introduces a timetable of future meetings, be noted.

7. Report of the Funding Sub-Group

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director for Performance and Development, on the progress of projects funded through Rugby Area Committee, and to inform the Committee of funds available in 2007-08.

Members noted the report and agree to the recommendations of the Funding Sub-

Group which met on 10 July 2007.

Resolved that the Area Committee -

- (1) Awards £8,000 through the Well-Being Fund for the Benn Partnership Centre, for the purposes and within the conditions as described in Appendix A.
- (2) Approves the revised project schedule for the £20,000 previously awarded to Rugby Borough Council for the Brownsover Community Information Project – on condition that anomalies in the project schedule are resolved to the satisfaction of the Area Office.
- (3) Adopts the priorities listed in paragraph 2.5 for the use of the Social Inclusion Fund and Well-Being Fund 2007-08; that projects are developed through appropriate partnerships and brought back to Area Committee for approval.
- (4) Requests that the Area Office begins to investigate the possible use of funds available in 2008-09 for use within rural areas and Eastlands and Hillmorton.
- (5) Notes the successful completion of the 'Benefit Take-Up for Older People' project, notes the progress of other projects, and requests progress reports for the next meeting on the Rural Hub and Domiciliary Care Agency Staff Training Projects.

8. Any Other Items

The Chair agreed to the discussion of agenda item 9 below as urgent business because of the need to commissioning the works rather than waiting for the next Area Committee in October.

9. Highways Safety and Maintenance Budget

Resolved, Members having considered the allocation of the Highways Safety and Maintenance Budget, that the –

- (1) following schemes should be financed through the Highways Safety and Maintenance Budget:-
 - £20,000 across the Borough for dropped kerbs
 - £80,000 for street lighting across the Borough
 - £50,000 (approximate cost) for improvements to Coventry Road
 - £20,000 (approximate cost) for improvements to Leicester Road
- (2) Area Committee will agree the use of the remainder of this budget at its next meeting.
- (3) Parish Councils and voluntary groups should be informed of the opportunity to put their views forward on priorities prior to the meeting.

10. Future Business Items

The Committee noted the future business items.

11. Thanks to Nick Darwen, Area Manager.

The Chair reminded Members that this was Nick Darwen's last meeting as he was taking up a new post within the County Council's Performance and Development Directorate. He thanked Nick for his hard work and support during his time as Area Manager for Rugby Area Committee and wished him well in the future.

The Committee presented Nick with a card and gift in appreciation of his work and also wished him well for the future

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Chair of Committee.

The Committee rose at 8:10 p.m.