

A Meeting of the Stratford East Joint Committee was held at the HRI Warwick , Wellesbourne on the 15 July 2008.

Present

Councillors

John Appleton (Chair)
Christopher Mills (Vice Chair)
David Booth
Simon Jackson
Susan Main
Beverley Mann
Nigel Rock
Andrew Patrick
Chris Williams
David Wise
Susan Wixey
Bob Stevens

Officers

Warwickshire County Council

Kushal Birla, Head Of Customer Service and Access
Martin Gibbins, Area Manager,
Pete Keeley, Member Services,
Vicky Kersey, Area Manager, Early Years & Childcare
Alison Mainey, Area Administrative Assistant
Andrew Savage, County Highways Operational Services Manager
Judith Young, Assistant Head of Service – Commissioning, Planning & Partnerships Division, Children, Young People and Families Directorate

Stratford on Avon District Council

Trevor Askew, Strategic Director,
Katherine Geddes, Area Co-ordinator
Alan Sheepy, Member Services,
Colin Staves, Policy and Conservation Manager
Nick Taylor, Customer Services Development Manager
Chris Wood, Community Leadership Manager.

1. Apologise for Absence

were received from Councillors Close, Hobbs and Wright

2. Disclosures of Interests.

Agenda Item 11 **Sufficiency of Childcare & Gap Analysis**

Councillors John Appleton and Simon Jackson declared personal interests as school Governors

Councillor David Booth declared a personal interest as a school Governor and in view of his wife's employment.

3. Minutes

Following comments from Councillor Nigel Rock it was agreed that he had seconded Councillor John Appleton as Chair not Councillor Richard Hobbs.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2008 be approved, as amended, and be signed by the Chair.

4. Name of Committee

Resolved:

That the name of the Committee be the Stratford on Avon East Joint Committee.

5. Public Question Time

Question from Bob Barker – Access to Leamington Railway Station.

“Will the Joint Area Committee make sure the redevelopment of Leamington Railway Station properly serves the needs of the Residents in your area? Will the County and District Councils involved co-operate in promoting a holistic scheme for bus interchange with timetabling and routing of the bus services such as 63/64? Disabled persons find using the train very difficult because the stops are not near the station. Furthermore, travellers from the east area of Stratford District find using the station difficult, even by car, due to the parking provision, noting that Warwick Parkway is on the wrong side of Warwick and Leamington. Could this also be looked at please?”

The Chair indicated that a written response would be sent to Mr Barker and copied to Members of the Committee.

6. Post Office Closures

The Committee considered a joint report which set out the programme for managing the impact of the Post Office closure announcements on the 24 June 2008 in South Warwickshire.

During his introduction of the item Nick Taylor, Customer Services Development Manager of the District Council, indicated that none of the proposed closures were in the Joint Committee's area.

Members discussed several aspects of the proposed closures. The following points were noted during the discussion:

- The Post Office had indicated that there would be a set number of closures and, if a post office that was originally proposed for closure was retained following representations, it was likely that the Post Office would commence consultations for the closure of the next post office on its list.
- Any response should question the accuracy of the data used by the Post Office in determining which post office should be proposed for closure and the Councils' officers should submit as much statistical evidence as possible to support the case of both councils.
- Consideration should be given to putting services into the Outreach scheme and also extend the areas covered to those communities without post offices.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet of the County Council and the Executive of the District Council be advised that the Committee regret the closure of the Post Offices and express its support for any motions agreed by both Councils objecting to the closures.

7. Proposed Public Pay Phone Removals

The Committee considered a report by Pat Reid, Head of Planning Services at the District Council relating to the intention of BT to remove 51 public payphones across the District which it describes as being "little used by consumers". The Joint Committee was asked for its views to inform the District Council.

During his introduction of the item Colin Staves indicated that the consultation period would now end on the 24 September.

A schedule of usage of the phones concerned had been circulated before the meeting.

The following points were noted during the discussion:

- Parish and Town Councils had been consulted on the proposals and the Joint Committee should offer its support to any views from the parish and town councils.
- Information would be obtained for Members regarding the possible purchase of phone boxes, the legal situation with regard to listing boxes and what protection was given to phone boxes in Conservation Areas.

Resolved:

That the District Council be advised of the Committee's views.

8. Highway Maintenance Plan 2008/09 and Five Year List of Structural Maintenance Schemes

The Committee considered a report from the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy of the County Council which provided information about highway maintenance work proposed in 2008/2009 and listed other sites where maintenance work would be required in the future.

During his introduction of the item Andrew Savage of County Highways Operations, drew attention to the multi agency working being undertaken relating to flooding issues.

During the discussion the following points were noted:

- It was aimed to reduce the number of blocked gullies to 5% of the network. The length of highways in the Stratford on Avon District represented 40% of the total length in the county.
- Specialist examination equipment was now being used to speed up the examination of gullies.
- Issues taken into account in the determining the priority of different schemes included accident data and information from parish councils.
- Consideration should be given to reduce the level of defects in the Stratford on Avon District down to the county average.
- Following information about a particular road at Kineton that had been identified for drainage repair and improvement works but which served only one property, it was suggested that consideration should be given to the extent of use of particular roads when determining the priority of such work.
- The importance of local knowledge on drainage problems was stressed.
- The facility existed for anyone to report problems relating to roads through the County Council's website.

- A report setting out the process for preparing the Maintenance Plan would be submitted to the Joint Committee.

Resolved:

That the Joint Committee's views on the Highways Maintenance Plan 2008/09 and the Five Year List of Maintenance Schemes be forwarded to the County Council's Cabinet.

9. Community Grants

The Committee considered a report which provided updated information on the budget available for Community Grants and the detail of an application from Young Enterprise South Warwickshire which had been deferred from the previous meeting. Chris Williams introduced the main points of the report.

During the discussion about links between the Young Enterprise South Warwickshire and the County Council's Education Business Partnership, Members acknowledged that, although there were differences between the two initiatives, consideration should be given to introducing greater level of integration between them.

Resolved:

- (1) That members of the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the background information to this application on the grounds that their presence would involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Members discussed the resources that were available to Young Enterprise South Warwickshire.

The meeting then continued in public.

Members were advised of the need to determine the application under the current criteria at this meeting having regard to proposed revised grant criteria to be considered later in the meeting.

Resolved, with one Member voting against:

- (2) That consideration of the application for grant of £1,200 be deferred and that the applicants be invited to speak to the Committee at its next meeting about their activities and need for financial support.

Members requested that, if possible a representative of the Education Business Partnership be invited to speak to the Committee at that meeting.

10. Community Grants – Proposed Integrated Scheme

The Joint Committee consider a joint report about proposals for operation of an integrated local grants scheme.

Members discussed several aspects of the proposed scheme. During the discussion the following points were noted:

- There were several weightings that determined the level of grant that would be available for a particular application.
- It was suggested that the amount proposed to be delegated to officers should be lower.
- Clarification should be given to “Lasting Benefit” and applications relating to one off summer activity schemes
- Retrospective funding such as planning and design was acceptable
- With regard to location scores, the level of Deprivation is one of several weightings aimed at giving more constant value in line with the details included in Paul Lankaster’s “State of the District” report
- The location scores should be revisited
- Intention to spread grants over wider number of applications

Resolved:

That the Committee endorses the proposals for operating a local grants scheme as detailed in the submitted report and requests that the rationale for location scores be revisited and reported back to the Committee.

11. Sufficiency of Childcare & Gap Analysis

The Committee considered a report which detailed the range and sufficiency of childcare in Stratford District and identified gaps in provision needing to be addressed.

Following introductory comments from Vicky Kersey, Area Manager Early Years & Childcare, Members discussed several aspects of the report. The following points were noted:

- Overall the Stratford on Avon District had adequate childcare provision.
- There were some rural pockets where the lack of transport created difficulties for families.

- 97% of children entering into school had received some pre school education.
- The Warwickshire rank criteria was set by the Government.

Resolved:

That the Joint Committee notes the content of the Sufficiency Assessment as a requirement of the Child Care Act 2006 and consider that the Gap analysis addresses the areas of need in the Stratford District.

The Joint Committee thanked Vicky for the information provided.

12. Vision for Southam – Project Funding

The Committee considered a report from Robert Walsh, Head of Community Services at the District Council which provided updated information on the progress of the 2020 Vision for Southam, summarised projects and suggested funding allocations in support of the 2020 Vision Action Plan.

The Committee was asked to consider and agree “in principle” to the allocation of funds as requested and detailed in the report subject to the stipulations in the report.

Following introductory comments from Katherine Geddes Area Coordinator Members discussed several aspects of the report. The following points were noted during the discussion:

Application 835 Farmers’ Market Signage and Directory

- Although the existing Farmers’ Market appeared to be struggling it did attract residents from nearby villages to visit the Town.
- The sale of local produce was encouraged although it was understood that there was some apprehension about the impact on local traders.
- It was proposed to work with the organisers of the Farmers Market to increase promotion of market.
- Consideration should be given to the benefits of the proposed signage being designed to include promotion of local produce.
- Work that had already been undertaken in connection with other market towns would be used in connection with the Southam project.

Resolved:

- (1) That the Committee agreed in principle to the allocation of funding requested in application 835.

Application 837 Streetscape and Transport Research

- There was a need to improve the appearance of temporary shop fascias in the town.
- A cycle plan had been prepared by the Napton Parish Council and the use of funding such as Cemex Community Funding, should be explored to develop the cycle routes.
- Any transport research should be aware that the Southam Shuttle no longer existed.
- Consideration should be given to the segregation of street waste bins so as to provide opportunities for greater recycling.
- Improvements at Market Hill would include a pedestrian crossing but it was not intended to introduce pedestrianisation schemes.
- The County Highways Depot at Wellesbourne should be approached to support streetscape initiatives.

Resolved:

- (2) That the Committee agreed in principle to the allocation of funding requested in application 837.

Application 836 Community Technology Bank

- There would be a nominal hire fee for the equipment which would then be reinvested in the scheme.
- It was suggested that owing to the uncertainty over the level of take up, initially the scheme should be awarded funding for four computers and printers. The remaining funding would be allocated once the levels of take up demonstrated that there was demand for them.
- The IT equipment would be provided through the District Council's IT department who would have regard to the suitability of the proposed IT equipment.
- Consideration should be given to any training needs of prospective users.

Resolved:

- (3) That the Committee agree in principle to the award of grant to enable the initial purchase of 4 laptops and the necessary peripherals as referred to in application 836 and, if the level of demand demonstrates the need for the remaining 4 laptops and associated ancillary items, the Committee would agree to the award of the remainder of the grant.

13. Items for Future meetings

16 September

- Speed Limit Review

Future Meetings

- HGVs on rural roads
- Safer Communities – possible police presentation.
- Warwickshire Primary Care Trust – regular updating reports and developments
- Parish Plans and their use in shaping policy of both Councils.

14. Urgent Business

None

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Chair

The meeting rose at 8.30 p.m.