

A Meeting of the Stratford East Joint Committee was held at the HRI Warwick, Wellesbourne on the 16 September 2008.

Present

Councillors

John Appleton (Chair)
Alan Akeister
David Booth
David Close
Simon Jackson
Susan Main
Beverley Mann
Andrew Patrick
Chris Williams
David Wise
Susan Wixey
Bob Stevens

Officers

Warwickshire County Council

Jo Edwards, Senior Road Safety Engineer,
Martin Gibbins, Area Manager,
Pete Keeley, Member Services,
Michelle McHugh, Interim Scrutiny Manager,
Steve O'Connor, Highways Engineer,
Amanda Wilson-Patterson, Localities and Communities Officer
Judith Young, Assistant Head of Service – Commissioning, Planning & Partnerships Division, Children, Young People and Families Directorate

Stratford on Avon District Council

Dave Nash, Strategic Director
Rebecca Goodman, Community Grants Officer,
Robert Walsh, Head of Community Services.

1. Apologise for Absence

were received from Councillors Richard Hobbs, Christopher Mills and Roger Wright.

2. Disclosures of Interests.

Agenda Item 5 - Stratford Joint Local Area Scrutiny Panel

Councillor Sue Main declared a personal interest as a member of the Scrutiny Panel.

Councillor Chris Williams declared a personal interest as a member of the Cabinet of the District Council and indicated that he would speak on the subject but not vote.

Agenda Item 8 - Community Grants

Councillors David Booth and Simon Jackson declared personal interests as Governors of Lighthorne Primary School and Temple Herdewyke Primary School respectively.

3. Minutes

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2008 be approved and be signed by the Chair.

With regard to minute relating to the Public Question from Bob Barker, Martin Gibbins, Area Manager for the County Council, indicated that he would circulate a copy of the written response made to Mr Barker to all Members of the Committee.

4. Public Question Time

(1) A question on behalf of the residents of Newbold Pacey.

The Committee was requested to agree to the reduction of the speed limit through the village from 40 mph to 30 mph. He outlined the characteristics of the road including S bends which he considered created safety hazards and dangers particularly when used by HGVs.

He drew attention to the dangers from HGVs gaining access to the M40 by using local roads. He requested the imposition of a weight restriction on the B4087.

Jo Edwards, Safety Engineer, reported that she had reviewed the situation having regard to national criteria and had concluded that a 40 mph limit would give better road safety results. The characteristics of the road were acceptable for a 40 mph speed limit. She indicated that it was intended to monitor the 40 mph speed limit for 12 months. There was a need for signage to be kept to a minimum and she would discuss this with the local member.

(2) Question from Bransby Thomas on behalf of Southam Town Council.

Mr Thomas advised the Joint Committee that the Town Council urged the Committee to support the continuation of no parking charges in the Wood Street Car Park at Southam. It was understood that, under the Market Town initiative, car parks in market towns should remain free. The Town Council suggested that there should be an 8th option of no charges in those market towns who do not want charges. He indicated that there were no real parking problems in Southam.

The Chair indicated that the Town Council's view would be taken into account when considering the Car Park Charges report later in the meeting.

5. Stratford Joint Local Area Scrutiny Panel - Parking and the Stratford Park and Ride

The Joint Committee considered the report of the Stratford Joint Local Area Scrutiny Panel relating to parking in Stratford upon Avon town centre and the financial viability of the Stratford Park and Ride. The report outlined the work undertaken and included the Panel's conclusions and recommendations for improvement.

Following introductory comments from Michelle McHugh, Interim Scrutiny Manager for the County Council, Members discussed several aspects of the report. The following points were noted:

A financial appraisal of the proposals should be undertaken.
The scope of the future reviews should include main rural areas.

It was then **Resolved:**

That the Stratford on Avon East Joint Committee note the recommendations of Stratford Joint Local Area Scrutiny Panel, subject to a financial appraisal of the proposals and to particular note being taken of the views of the Stratford on Avon South Joint Committee, and agree for the report to be forwarded to:

Warwickshire County Council's Environment OSC on 25th September
Stratford on Avon District Council's OSC B on 25th September
Stratford on Avon District Council's Cabinet on 29th October
Warwickshire County Council's Cabinet on 2nd October.

6. Off-Street Parking Charges

The Joint Committee considered a report from Robert Walsh, Head of Community Services at the District Council, seeking the Committee's views on charging levels for off-street car parks operated by Stratford-on-Avon District Council.

Robert Walsh presented the report.

During the discussion the following points were noted.

There was concern about the impact on the viability of Southam if charges were introduced in the Wood Street Car Park

Having regard to the size of market towns and their importance for surrounding villages it would be more appropriate for such towns to determine whether charges should be imposed.

With regard to the options for charges in Market Towns, the Committee identified a further option of free parking irrespective of length of stay. This was the Committee's preferred option.

There should be a principle of free parking in market towns until such time as the town indicate otherwise.

It was then **Resolved:**

That there be no charge for parking in the Wood Street car park at Southam.

That market towns themselves should determine whether the proposed charges are in order.

That the proposals for concessionary permits be endorsed.

That, as a matter of principle, car parking should remain free in market towns until such time as the market town concerned agrees otherwise.

For charges in Market Towns, the Committee's preferred option is that such parking is free irrespective of length of stay.

That the Committee's views on the Off-Street Car Parking charges are forwarded to the Cabinet of the District Council for consideration.

7. Speed Limit Review

The Committee considered a report from the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy of the County Council relating to the objections received in response to the statutory consultation exercise in respect of certain speed limit review proposals.

The Committee considered the objections to each of the proposals.

(1) General Objection – Appendix A

Resolved:

That the proposals are implemented as advertised.

(2) S/5 A423 Banbury Road, Ladbroke Bypass

During the discussion the following points were noted:

Councillor Alan Kaiser expressed concern about the blanket reduction because:

He felt there was no need to impose speed limits in certain areas.

The limits could not be policed effectively.

Drivers would not be supportive of the proposed speed limit.

Both the Ladbroke and Fenny Compton Parish Councils had requested the 50 mph speed limit.

Certain Members considered that the speed limit would be more effective if it was one continuous speed limit for drivers.

Improvements were proposed on the Fosse Way to reduce accidents – it was not proposed to amend the speed limit.

The proposals were in accordance with the LAA objectives to reduce accidents.

It was **Resolved** by 10 votes to 2:

That the proposal be implemented as advertised.

S/6 A425 Southam Road/Leamington Road, Southam.

Members were advised that although the Police had objected to this proposal, they had not objected to the speed limit proposals on the A425 in the Warwick District.

Resolved:

That the proposal be implemented as advertised

S/22 B4100 Banbury Road, Chesterton.

The following points were noted:

There were some concerns about consistency with speed limits at Gaydon.

An examination would be undertaken into the need for a speed limit on the length road leading to junction 12 of the M40.

Having regard to environment requirements, the number of signs would be limited as much as could be.

It was then **Resolved:**

That the proposals be implemented as advertised.

S/27 B4452 Deppers Bridge Road, Harbury,

Resolved:

That the proposals be implemented as advertised.

A426 Rugby Road, Southam to Dunchurch.

Following concern from several members about the need to reduce the speed limit on this section of road to 50 mph, it was **Resolved:**

That no changes be made to the speed limit on the section of road concerned but that the officers monitor the situation and undertake a review in twelve months.

(7) Other Matters

Members requested that a briefing note be circulated to the Joint Committee setting out the proposals for improvement works on the Fosse Way and that a report on weight limits on rural roads be submitted to a future meeting.

8. Community Grants

The Committee had before it a report setting out grant budgets available together with details of applications which had been received for revenue and capital grants.

At the invitation of the Chair, representatives of the applicant organisations addressed the Committee in support of the applications shown and answered Members questions raised on the applications.

(1) Applicant Young Enterprise South – reference 784

Project: Provide educational programmes in primary and secondary schools to help young people understand and give them personal experiences of how business works. This application had been deferred from the Committee's 17 June meeting to enable further information to be obtained on the application.

Total Cost: £21,250

Grant

Requested: £1,200 (30% of the £4,000 requested. The project is District wide and the application will also be considered by the South and West Joint Committees).

Discussion: Councillors David Booth and Simon Jackson declared personal interests as Governors of Lighthorne Heath Primary School and Temple Herdwyke Primary School respectively.

The Committee was addressed by Mr T. Crisp on behalf of Young Enterprise South Warwickshire who outlined the aims and purpose of the organisation and then responded to several questions from Members.

He confirmed that, as had been the case with previous grants awarded to the organisation, all of the grant would be spent entirely on educational purposes in the Stratford on Avon District. He outlined the activities on which the grant would be spent.

It was then **Resolved:**

That a grant of £1,200 be approved.

(2) Applicant Shakespeare Hospice – Reference 807 – Capital

Project: To create a drop in centre in Stratford upon Avon (the Life Well Centre) for Patients, carers and family members affected by terminal illness.

Total Cost: £101,103

Grant

Requested: £6,000 (30% of the total grant requested of £20,000)

The Committee was addressed by Clare Bowry on behalf of the Hospice.

Following comments about the need to discuss financial information provided in the private papers for the meeting, it was **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 then discussed available resources to the Hospice and the balance figure shown on the bank statement, which had been circulated with the private papers for the meeting. Members felt that that fuller financial information was required before a decision could be taken.

The meeting then continued in public.

It was then **Resolved** with one Member voting against:

That consideration of the award of a grant be deferred to enable further financial information to be provided.

(3) Applicant Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) – Reference 804 Capital

Project: To move the entire CAB operation to different premises at which will provide easier access to clients and provide the opportunity to extend the range of services being offered.

Total Cost: £41,397

Grant

request: £2,250 (30% of the total grant request of £7,500)

The Committee was addressed by Sarah Cole, Deputy Manager of the Stratford CAB, who outlined the reasons for the application for grant and then responded to several questions from Members.

The following points were noted during the discussion:

The Stratford South Area Joint Committee had requested that each of the Joint Committees should consider making a grant of one third of the total requested.

With regard to the level of service provided in the East Area, CAB did not have an office in Southam at present although discussions were continuing to acquire suitable accommodation.

In the meantime services were being maintained by advisors at other offices and by improved telephone access.

16% of clients were from the East Joint Committee area.

Improved and extended services would be provided if CAB obtained more funding.

It was suggested that further information was required in relation to the bank balance and the figures shown in the accounts that had been supplied in the exempt papers.

It was then **Resolved** by nine votes to one:

That consideration of the application be deferred to enable further information to be obtained on the accounts of CAB.

9. B4451/07 Harbury Station Bridge

The Committee considered a report from the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy of the County Council which outlined the results of a consultation on proposals to deal with a weak bridge issue and recommended a course of action.

Steve Connor, Highways Engineer, presented the report

During the discussion the following points were noted:

The weight limit would displace hgv's onto other roads.

Although the County Council's Cabinet had agreed that there would be no further exemptions for this proposal there could be implications for public transport operators and further consideration should be given to such issues.

The former Area Committee of the County Council had considered the views of local farmers during their initial consideration of the proposals. There had been no complaints from the farming community since then.

Resolved:

That the County Council be asked to authorise the introduction of a 7.5 tonnes permanent weight restriction on the bridge with limited exemptions as detailed in the report and that further investigations be carried out into bus service issues and traffic signing in the area.

10. Ratley and Upton Parish Plan

The Joint Committee considered a report relating to an assessment of the Ratley and Upton Parish Plan.

Malcolm Thorn presented the Plan to the Joint Committee on behalf of the Ratley and Upton Parish Project. He outlined the history to the Plan and expressed appreciation to the former Dasset Area Committee of the District Council and local businesses who had grant aided the project.

Karen Johnson of the District Council reported that, following the Joint Committee's consideration of the Bishops Itchington Parish Plan at a previous meeting, discussions were being held relating to the adoption of parish plans by both the District and County Councils. A report would be submitted to the next round of Joint Committees.

Following comments from Councillor Jackson about the enthusiasm of the project team under the guidance of Mr Thorne, it was Resolved:

That the Parish Plan be adopted as a local information source to offer advice to the relevant services of the Stratford on Avon District Council.

That the Stratford on Avon District Council seeks to respond to the Parish Action Plan in ways suggested in Appendix C of the report

That the Parish Plan is adopted by the Stratford on Avon District Council as a material consideration in processing planning applications, in accordance with Policy COM1 of the Local Plan Review.

That the Parish Plan Steering Group, Parish Council and the residents of Ratley and Upton Parish be commended for preparing their Parish Plan and that they be encouraged to implement and review their Action Plan.

11. Flood Risk Management

The Committee considered a report from Robert Weeks, Head of Environment of the District Council, which provided an update on the work being undertaken following the July 2007 floods and seeking the Committee's views on what additional information would be required.

Following introductory comments from Dave Nash, Strategic Director of the District Council Members discussed several aspects of the report. The following points were noted:

The District and County Councillors for Wellesbourne would be updated on the action being taken to resolve flooding issues in the area in particular the Newbold Road area.

The District Council send out a regular briefing note on flooding issues in the District and consideration should be given to circulating this to all members of the joint committees.

Members noted the importance of consulting the parish councils for local knowledge on areas prone to flooding.

Recent planning advice includes new guidance on flooding risks.

It was suggested that although there is collaborative working between the District and County Councils and the Environment Agency, consideration should be given to increasing the staffing resources available to deal with local flooding issues.

A report was requested for a future meeting dealing with:

The responsibilities of landowners to control surface water run off.

Action being taken to resolve highway drainage difficulties.

Action being taken by the Environment Agency on flooding issues. The Environment Agency should be invited to the meeting to discuss any issues.

Items for Future meetings

The following items were noted for future meetings:

Weight Limits on rural roads.

Update on flooding issues.

13. Urgent Business

None.

The Committee rose at 8.25 p.m.

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Chair