

SOUTH JOINT COMMITTEE

19 March 2009

*Held at Newbold on Stour Village Hall
Meeting commenced: 6.00 pm Meeting ended: 8.30 pm*

Present: County Councillor R Hyde; Councillors Rev N Beamer, M Beckett, M Brain, R Cheney, R Cockings, J Dill-Russell, J Fradgley, A Gardner, S Gray, T Honychurch, P Moore, M Perry, K Rolfe, C Saint, I Seccombe and P Seccombe

Apologies: Councillors G Roache, V Seaman, J Taylor and R White

56. Disclosure of Interests

Councillor Cheney disclosed a Personal Interest in Minute 62 in respect of Brailes Village Hall grant application.

Councillor Rolfe disclosed a Personal Interest in Minute 65 as a Governor of Alveston Primary School.

Councillor Fradgley disclosed a Personal Interest in Minute 61 as a member of Friends of the Earth and Minute 62 in respect of Stratford College grant application.

Councillor Morse disclosed a Personal Interest in Minute 62 in respect of Shipston Poms grant application.

Councillor Hyde disclosed a Personal Interest in Minute 68 as a Non-Executive Director of Centro.

57. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2008 were confirmed and signed.

58. Public Question Time (30 Minutes)

Notice of one question had been received. Mr D Badger:-

"would like to ask this committee if they would approve the undertaking of a feasibility study into extending the footpath from the top of Loxley Road and down Knights Lane in the next financial year".

Mr M Gibbins Stratford Area Manager, replied on behalf of C A Burrows, Minor Works Programme Manager, at Warwickshire County Council:-

"As you are aware, all the delegated budget funding for 2009/10 was allocated at the Transport Capital Seminar in January 2009 and the report is going to the Stratford South Joint Committee on Thursday March 19th 2009. Mr Badger's request can be explored during 2009 and if suitable could then be added to the list of minor works to be considered at next years Stratford Area Transport Capital Seminar likely to take place in January 2010. This scheme would also need the support of the local councillors within that division".

In addition to the foregoing, other persons had indicated a wish to address the Committee on items on the Agenda, references to which are contained within the individual Minutes below.

59. World Class Stratford

The Committee received a presentation from Paul Ogden, (Project Leader) which provided Members with an update on the work programme and the projects contained in Phase 1 of the scheme. Members were pleased to note that the Bancroft Gardens were to be officially opened on 24 April 2009.

In particular Mr Ogden confirmed that the £1.8M grant allocation from Advantage West Midlands (AWM) originally assigned for the pedestrian bridge over the River Avon had now been re-allocated to:

- Comprehensive improvements to the public realm and traffic management along Waterside and Southern Lane. Proposals for this are currently being finalised and will be brought forward shortly;
- Upgrading of the Riverside Promenade and the area surrounding the Bandstand on the North Recreation Ground. This is a new scheme designed to make the Recreation Ground more attractive for public use and to stage events and festivals;
- Lighting Schemes for both Tramway Bridge and Holy Trinity Church to create a spectacular night time feature of these two famous Stratford landmarks;
- Heritage Reconstruction of the River Ferry, together with installation of new ramps to improve passenger accessibility from the Recreation Ground and the existing RSC Theatre Gardens; and,
- Bancroft Scheme - additional funding for extra items and anticipated extra costs associated with the scheme.

Also outlined to the Committee was the progress and initiatives in support of a Phase 2 bid to AWM later in the year and details of the projects contained in this phase were outlined to Members.

60. Update on the follow up to Stratford District Flooding 2008

Councillor Brain now disclosed a Personal Interest in this item insofar as it related to Broom, as one of his relations was a landowner within this area.

The Committee received an update on the 'follow-up' to Stratford District Flooding 2008, and welcomed to the meeting Mr P Coxhill representing the Environment Agency.

Members had been invited to submit questions in advance and Mr Coxhill addressed the Committee on these issues and accepted further additional questions from Members.

Mr J McLeman, in accordance with Standing Orders, had also submitted a question on flooding at the Racecourse Brook, which was duly answered by Mr Coxhill.

61. Draft Sustainable Community Strategy

Consideration was given to the consultation draft of the District Sustainable Community Strategy, developed by the Stratford District Partnership, to set out a shared long-term vision for the District that had regard to local economic, social and environmental objectives.

The Committee was invited to submit comments on the draft document prior to its formal adoption by the District Council at its meeting scheduled to be held on 20 April 2009.

Once adopted, the Strategy SMART targets and appropriate financial resources would be translated into business plans that would be monitored by the various Groups established by the Local Strategic Partnership.

In receiving the Strategy, the Committee made the following observations/comments;

The top three challenges were considered to be the shortage of affordable housing, lack of access and young people.

It was suggested that the references to qualifications and skills need to reflect the needs of those not in work and of those in work but seeking to progress to alternative employment.

There was a call for greater ambition as regards climate change and reference was made to the 'Transition Towns' initiative as a means of promoting a more holistic approach.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:

That the Committee request that the comments made in the preamble above be taken into account in finalising the Stratford District Sustainable Community Strategy.

62. Community Grants

Consideration was given to the recommendations from the South Funding Sub-Group for the award of Community Grants under the Joint Community Grants Scheme.

The Committee was informed that the East Joint Committee had resolved to transfer its unspent grant balance of £4330 to the South Joint Committee.

On the invitation of the Chair, the following people addressed the Committee:

- a) Chris Wrighton, in respect of the grant application for Brailes Village Hall Management Committee;
- b) Julia Phillips, in respect of the grant application for the Council for Voluntary Service and Volunteer Bureau; and,
- c) Town Councillor Angela Noyce, in respect of the application for Festive Shipston.

The Committee then considered the Funds Sub-Group's recommendations and then gave due consideration to the additional funds received by East Joint Committee and following discussion a proposal was duly tabled and supported (10, 11 and 12 below refers).

RESOLVED:

- (1) That a grant of £4,800 be awarded to ILEAP towards the cost of the inclusive leisure project for Stratford District;
- (2) That a grant of £600 be awarded to Shipston Proms towards the cost of producing a Music Festival in Shipston Area;
- (3) That a grant of £850 be awarded to George Povey Gardening project towards the setting up costs for gardening project for Autistic Children in Stratford District;
- (4) That the grant application for £15,000 to Cherington Village Hall towards the cost of replacing the existing village hall with a new building be carried forward and considered alongside new applications in the next financial year subject to the budget being available;
- (5) That the grant application for £12,230 to Quinton & Admington Village Hall towards the costs of providing Changing and Shower facilities in extension at Village Hall be carried forward and considered alongside new applications in the next financial year subject to the budget being available;
- (6) That the grant application for £4491 to Little Compton Village Hall towards the costs of providing a new kitchen, ladies toilet and cloakroom be carried forward and considered alongside new applications in the next financial year subject to the budget being available;
- (7) That no grant be awarded to Stratford College, towards the cost of providing dance and music workshops celebrating culture and diversity in our community, for the reasons given by the Sub-Group;
- (8) That no grant be awarded to Brailes Village Hall Management Committee, towards the costs of insulation and central heating improvements, for the reasons given by the Sub-Group;
- (9) That no grant to Age Concern South Warwickshire, towards the cost of information and health training programme for the reasons given by the Sub-Group;
- (10) That, a grant of £1,000 be awarded to Loxley Parish Council towards the cost of providing gateway structures at entrance to village;
- (11) That a grant of £600 be awarded to Festive Shipston towards the cost of producing the Shipston Wool Fair and Town Crier Competition; and,

- (12) That a grant of £2,730 be awarded to the voluntary community transport project for WCC Social Services to be provided by Stratford-on-Avon CVS/VB.

63. Highway Maintenance Plan 2009/10 and five year list of Structural Maintenance Schemes

Jeff Welsby (Interim Group Manager, Environment and Economy, Warwickshire County Council) attended the meeting for this item and answered members questions raised on the report.

The Committee was invited to comment on the Highway Maintenance Plan 2009/10 and the Five Year List of Maintenance Schemes.

In considering the paper, the Committee noted that it was intended to use the available Revenue and Capital funding;

- 1) to continue last year's increases in patching and major patching to minimise potholes and uneven pavements;
- 2) to continue levels of carriageway surface dressing and footway slurry sealing which provided cost effective methods of prolonging the life of roads and pavements and which reduced the likelihood of potholes and uneven pavements;
- 3) to continue the footway resurfacing programme to minimise uneven pavements;
- 4) to maintain the amount of carriageway micro asphalt to extend the life of roads which were not suitable for surface dressing;
- 5) to set the street lighting budget at a level which would allow for all necessary column repairs;
- 6) drainage repair and improvement work to increase as a result of an increase in Area Committees' drainage budget; and
- 7) to review the level of other maintenance work and particularly winter maintenance to ensure the level of activity was appropriate.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Highway Maintenance Plan 2009/10 and the Five Year List of Maintenance Schemes, as submitted, be supported; and
- (2) That the Joint Committees' Drainage Revenue Allocation be used on unblocking gullies and repairing damaged pipes.

64. Delegated Transport Budget for Safety, Maintenance and Minor Works 2009/10

Jeff Welsby (Interim Group Manager, Environment and Economy, Warwickshire County Council) attended the meeting for this item and answered members questions raised on the report.

Following the Members' seminar held on 23 January 2009, details were reported of the proposed 2009/10 delegated budget allocations for the Joint Committee, as discussed at that seminar.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:

That the Committees 2009/10 Delegated Budget be allocated as follows:

1. Agree the £50,000 route treatment on the A422 (Alcester Road) – Arden Street to A46 be top sliced from the total budget of £440,000.
2. Agree to divide the remaining £390,000 between the three Stratford-on-Avon Joint Committees.
3. Support the Local Schemes (Minor Improvements) Programme for Stratford-on-Avon South as outlined in the report.
4. Support the removal of the requests listed for Stratford-on-Avon South as outlined in the report.
5. Support the Street Lighting Allocations for Stratford-on-Avon Area as outlined in the report.
6. Support the Drainage Allocations for Stratford-on-Avon Area as outlined in the report.
7. Support the Footway Re-Construction Allocations as outlined in the report.

65. Provision of primary school places in Stratford-upon-Avon town

Consideration was given to proposals to

1. increase the capacity of The Willows C of E (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School from 40 to 45 pupils per year with effect from September 2010; and
2. increase the capacity of Alveston C of E (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School from 20 to 30 pupils per year with effect from September 2010;
3. change the Bridge Town Primary School priority area by transferring the parish of Clifford Chambers to the priority area of Welford-on-Avon Primary School with effect from September 2010 admissions.

The Committee was asked to consider these proposals and to submit any comments it wished to make to the County Council's Cabinet.

In considering the proposals the Committee noted that consultation with stakeholders on these cases had identified broad support. However, it had been noted that there was concern that there may need to be further steps to be taken to provide some surplus capacity across the town to widen parental choice and in particular to address the pressure for school places in the Bridge Town area.

Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED:

That the County Council Cabinet be informed that the Stratford-on-Avon South Joint Committee supported the proposals to:

- Increase the capacity at The Willows C of E (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School from 40 to 45 pupils per year with effect from September 2010;
- Increase the capacity at Alveston C of E (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School from 20 to 30 pupils per year with effect from September 2010; and,
- That the Bridge Town Primary School priority area be changed by transferring the parish of Clifford Chambers to the priority area of Welford-on-Avon Primary School with effect from September 2010 admissions.

66. Alcester Road Cycle Scheme - Phase 1

Proposals to develop Phase 1 of a new cycleway along the A422 Alcester Road between Proctor Way and Brookside Road in Stratford-upon-Avon were considered by the Committee. The scheme had been specifically identified in the current Warwickshire Local Transport Plan, and had been included in the County Council's Transport Capital Programme for 2008/09. It was proposed that the scheme would be delivered in two phases, and would link with the existing cycle facilities on the Alcester Road which currently end adjacent to the 'Saltway Centre'.

The options open to the Committee were to

- approve the construction of Phase 1 of the recommended Alcester Road Cycle Scheme, which included the provision of an advisory cycle lane and the removal of three right-hand turn lanes, or
- to support an alternative scheme which retained the three right-hand turn lanes but still delivered an improvement for cyclists.

Accordingly the Committee, by 15 votes to 1

RESOLVED:

That an alternative scheme which retained the three right-hand turn lanes but still delivered an improvement for cyclists be supported.

67. Stratford-upon-Avon Leisure Centre Link

It had been agreed that the planning application for the current scheme be put on hold whilst options were being considered for the wider Bridgeway area. Members would be updated regarding the conclusions of the Bridgeway Study and of any suggestions or proposals for future work.

68. Shakespeare Railway Line upgrade

Tom Pierpoint (Transport Planner) attended the meeting for this item and answered Members' questions raised on the report.

Details were reported on proposals to improve rail provision in the Stratford-on-Avon district by upgrading the Shakespeare Rail Line.

In receiving the report, the Committee agreed with the improvements outlined, in particular that of:

- the provision of late night services between Stratford-upon-Avon and Birmingham; and
- developing a scheme to deliver significant improvements and to enhance the appearance of the station at Stratford-upon-Avon.

Having regard to the above, it was

RESOLVED:

That County Council Cabinet be informed that the Stratford-on-Avon South Joint Committee welcome the proposals to improve rail provision in Stratford-on-Avon District.

69. A3400 Guild Street - Stratford upon Avon

The Committee received a briefing note which outlined responses to comments made following a recent Members site visit.

70. Stratford Girls Grammar School - Funding

John Harmon (Assistant Head of Service, Capital and Property, Warwickshire County Council)

The Committee received a report which outlined the opportunities for linking funding from the Authority with funds raised by Stratford Grammar School for Girls (SGSG) to provide additional accommodation at the school. In addition, circulated to the Committee was a letter that had been received by The Chair from the Headteacher of the school, expressing their disappointment at the response.

The Committee noted that The County Council had agreed to support SGSG by meeting the cost of design work sufficient to provide an agreed, approved scheme and that they would continue to review their priorities and would, when funding was available, implement proposals for SGSG.

RESOLVED:

That the Joint Committee supported the actions taken and proposed in relation to additional accommodation for Stratford-upon-Avon Grammar School for Girls.

71. Post Office - Temporary Closures

The Committee received details of the temporary cessation of the Hosted Outreach Service at Brailes and a Partner Outreach Service at Preston-on-Stour. The Post Office had stated that this disruption was regarded as temporary and that they were continuing to work to find a solution that would provide a Post Office presence in each of the affected communities.

Members requested that a response be sent jointly from both Councils expressing much disappointment that these services had ceased.

72. Reports of Community Forums

On the presentation of the reports from the meetings of the Stratford-upon-Avon Community Forum held on 17 February 2009 and the Stour Community Forum held on 26 February 2009 it was noted that there had been no items referred to the Committee for attention/discussion.

73. Items for Future meetings

The Committee requested that following the first year since the implementation of the Joint Committees a review be carried out. Martin Gibbins agreed to circulate a briefing note to all members setting out the proposed arrangements for the review of locality arrangements.

74. Vote of Thanks

This being the last meeting of the Joint Committee prior to the County Council elections in June 2009, Members of the Committee passed on their thanks and best wishes to County Councillors Richard Hyde and Jill Dill-Russell, who were not seeking re-election.

In particular, the Committee were grateful to County Councillor Hyde for his Chairmanship of the Committee during its inaugural year.

CHAIR

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