

The Stratford-on-Avon Area Committee met at Elizabeth House, Church Street, Stratford-upon-Avon on the 16 May 2007.

Present:-

Councillors George Atkinson (Chair)
“ Richard Hyde (Vice Chair)
“ John Appleton
“ Peter Barnes
“ Jill Dill Russell
“ David Booth
“ Richard Hobbs
“ Nina Knapman
“ Helen McCarthy
“ Sue Main
“ Mike Perry
“ Chris Saint
“ Izzi Seccombe
“ Bob Stevens

Officers:-

Environment and Economy Directorate

Roger Bennett, Traffic Projects Group,
Rama Isaiah, Regeneration Project Manager
Roger Newham, Head of Transport Planning,

Community Protection Directorate

William Brown, Strategic Director for Community Protection and County Fire Officer.

Performance and Development Directorate

Ian Marriott, Corporate Legal Services Manager.
Martin Gibbins, Stratford Area Manager.
Pete Keeley, Member Services.
Michelle McHugh, Scrutiny Officer.
Helene Toogood, Community Partnership Officer.
Amanda Wilson-Patterson – Area Administrative Officer.

8 members of the public attended.

1. Election of Chair

Councillor Peter Barnes, seconded by Councillor Bob Stevens, moved and it was Resolved:-

That Councillor George Atkinson be elected as Chair of the Area Committee.

2. Appointment of Vice Chair.

Councillor David Booth, seconded by Councillor Nina Knapman, moved:-

That Councillor Jill Dill-Russell be elected as Vice Chair of the Area Committee.

Councillor Bob Stevens, seconded by Councillor Richard Hobbs, moved:

That Councillor Richard Hyde be appointed as Vice Chair of the Area Committee.

On being put to the vote four members voted for Councillor Jill Dill-Russell and seven Members voted for Councillor Richard Hyde. Richard Hyde was declared Vice Chair.

3. General

(1) Apologies

None.

(2) Members' Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

(i) Joint Membership Declarations

The following members who were also members of the Stratford on Avon District Council and, where indicated, also members of the Warwickshire Police Authority, declared personal interests in any item on the agenda affecting the District Council or the Police Authority.

Councillors John Appleton, Peter Barnes, Richard Hobbs (also member of the Warwickshire Police Authority), Sue Main, Mike Perry, Chris Saint, Izzi Seccombe (also member of the Warwickshire Police Authority) and Bob Stevens.

(ii) Other declarations

Councillor Richard Hyde declared a personal interest in **Agenda Item 11. - Warwickshire County Council Response to Stratford-upon-Avon Urban Design Framework** as a Trustee of the Shakespeare Trust and a

member of the Board of Advantage West Midlands.

(3) Minutes of the meeting held on the 21 March 2007 and Matters Arising

(i) Minutes

Martin Gibbins, Area Manager, indicated that, with regard to Minute 13 Stratford on Avon Well Being Fund Potential Commission, in addition to the projects referred to in the minutes, the Committee had also agreed that those organisations who were awarded a community computer should also be awarded a grant of up to £300 to be able to purchase Microsoft Office 2003.

It was then Resolved:-

That the minutes of the Stratford-on-Avon Area Committee's 21 March 2007 meeting be approved as amended and be signed by the Chair.

(ii) Matters Arising

Minute 4(2) – Extension of the 30 mph speed limit at Great Aine.

In response to comments from Councillor Nina Knapman about progress with this matter, Roger Newham indicated that a report on the matter would be submitted to the July meeting of the Committee.

4. Public Questions and Answers

The public questions that were raised at the meeting related to specific agenda items and are referred to in the minute of the item concerned.

5. Local Area Scrutiny - Update

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director of Performance and Development which advised the Committee of the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Coordinating Group in relation to an appropriate topic for a local area scrutiny exercise.

Following introductory comments from Michelle McHugh, Scrutiny Officer, it was Resolved:

- (1) That the Committee supports the proposal for a joint local area scrutiny exercise with Stratford on Avon District Council relating to parking (including verge parking) in Stratford District and the Stratford park and ride
- (2) That the Committee nominates county councillors George Atkinson, Peter Barnes, Sue Main and Mike Perry (3-1) as the County Council representatives on the joint panel

6. Proposed Changes to Waiting Restrictions at Various Locations in Stratford on Avon District

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy.

Various changes to the Consolidation Order for the Stratford on Avon District were advertised on 8th February 2007. This included some administrative changes. Objections have been received to some of the proposals. The report details the objections which have been received and makes recommendations to Area Committee for their consideration.

(1) Questions from the public

(i) Mr Blackwell of Broad Street, Stratford upon Avon

Mr Blackwell spoke on behalf of local residents and expressed concern about the proposed waiting restrictions in Broad Street to overcome difficulties associated with parents taking children to the school. In particular he was concerned about the loss of car parking spaces and at the introduction of waiting restrictions that would be for the whole year whereas the School's difficulties related to school hours and term times. He suggested that the restrictions should be for term times only and during school hours with appropriate changeable signs to indicate if the restrictions related to term time only or non term time.

Roger Newham advised the Committee that the suggestions from Mr Blackwell would require a permanent arrangement to physically change the signs. Also term times varied and a term time only restriction would not be viable. He added that the lack of parking in the area occurred more in the evening than during the school hours.

He then introduced the main aspects of the report following which Members discussed various points and made the following points:

- Regard must be had to the concerns of the School and what was best for the community.
- Other Councils were known to have introduced schemes that met most demands and the Council should investigate these.
- The difficulties in changing signs was questioned.
- The Broad Street issues should be re-examined and a further report be submitted to the Committee.

Resolved:

- (1) That the Area Committee agree the proposed changes to the Stratford on Avon Consolidation Order as detailed in the report apart from the proposals relating to Broad Street, Stratford upon Avon.

- (2) That the proposals at Broad Street be re-examined having regard to the Committee's comments and a further report be submitted to a future meeting.

7. Review of On-Street Parking Pay and Display Charges

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy.

A review of on-street parking charges in Stratford on Avon District had been carried out. Cabinet will be requested to approve the introduction of these changes with effect from 1st July 2007. The Area Committee was invited to comment on the proposals.

During his introduction of the item Roger Newham, reported that District Councillor Chris Williams, the Stratford on Avon District Council's Community Services portfolio holder had indicated that the District Council had not yet completed its review of the car parking within the District Council's control. The District Council considered that the proposed increases in on-street car parking charges should be higher. Roger Newham confirmed that the officers considered that the 50 pence charge for half an hour was the most appropriate charge in the circumstances. He added that this charge might encourage the District Council to amend the charges for off street parking that were controlled by them.

During the discussion the following views were expressed:-

- Some Members suggested that there was insubstantial evidence that the current system was being abused by meter feeding.
- Some retailers were concerned about the impact the increase would have on trade in the Town.
- Parking in Stratford upon Avon was a strategic matter that should be considered by the recently established scrutiny group particularly having regard to other major issues such as the park and ride scheme and the impact of World Class Stratford.
- It was suggested that consideration of the issues should be deferred to enable greater public involvement in the proposal.
- Meter feeding resulted in less movement of vehicles and consequently less short term parking.

Following concluding comments from the Chair, the printed recommendation, as follows, was put to the vote and was carried by nine votes to three, with one abstention:

That the Area Committee support the proposed changes to the charges for on-street pay and display parking shown in Column B of Table 1 of the report to take effect from 1st July 2007.

A recorded vote was requested and the results were as follows:

For the motion (10) – Councillors John Appleton, George Atkinson, Peter Barnes, Jill Dill-Russell, Richard Hobbs, Nina Knapman, Helen McCarthy, Chris Saint, Izzi Seccombe and Bob Stevens

Against the motion (3) – Councillors Richard Hyde, Sue Main and Mike Perry.

Abstention (1) – Councillor David Booth.

8. Arden Street, Stratford-upon-Avon - Proposed Puffin Crossing

The Area Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy relating to the provision of a Puffin Crossing to provide a safe crossing point across Arden Street.

In response to comments from Members, Roger Newham reported that the outcomes of the Local Inquiry into the Cattle Market proposals and from World Class Stratford were unlikely to change the characteristics of vehicle/pedestrian movements in Arden Street. He added that the recommended location for the crossing had been the result of a great deal of research.

It was then Resolved by ten votes to one, with three abstentions:

That approval be given to the proposed Puffin Crossing in Arden Street, Stratford-upon-Avon as shown on Plan No. 9-2-A4390-6-02 attached to the report.

9. Review of Parking Policies

The Area Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy.

A review had been carried out of the County Council's parking policies. At its meeting on 26th April, the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report on possible changes. The Committee requested that the draft policies be submitted to Area Committees and other consultees for comment. The Area Committee's views were sought.

During his introduction of the item Roger Bennett, Traffic Projects Group, advised members that the proposed Policy was prompted by difficulties which had arisen in Rugby Borough and in Warwick District.

.During the discussion the following points were made:

- Members supported the proposed policy. In particular, support was given for discouraging footway parking, the provision of permits for registered guest houses, Carers and customers of established garage businesses.

- There must not be any difficulties in applying the Policy to other areas of the County and to rural communities.
- Members were advised that the parking policy would not impact on the work of the Members Scrutiny Group which had been established jointly with the District Council, to examine parking in the District, including on-street and off-street parking and visitor parking issues.

Resolved:

That the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee be advised of the Area Committee's views.

10. B4451/07 Harbury Station Bridge - Proposed Works

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy which summarised recent discussions with Parish Councils and local residents and proposed a way forward in the light of issues raised.

(1) Questions from the public

(a) Question from Mr D. Malin, a resident of Deppers Bridge.

Mr Malin advised the Committee that he welcomed the proposal and that he considered the success of the scheme would depend on the level of control of rat running through local villages, particularly Bishops Itchington that was likely to result from the weight restriction. Many residents were against the traffic lights scheme if the weight limit was unsuccessful. He urged the Committee to pursue the footbridge option.

(b) Question from Mr J. Moore, a local farmer.

Mr Moore spoke against the proposed traffic lights option and against the weight limit. He advised the Committee that he farmed land on both sides of the bridge and the proposed weight limit would involve a 4 mile detour for his heavy agricultural vehicles. This would impose both a financial and time burden on his business. He reported that it was likely the heavier agricultural vehicles would need to use the bridge for approximately 6 weeks per year, mostly at harvest time, and then only one vehicle would use the centre of the bridge at any one time. He added that agricultural vehicles having to use the alternative route would be considered as a hazard by many road users.

(2) Committee's consideration.

Roger Newham, Head of Transport Planning in the Environment and Economy Directorate, presented the report.

Councillor Bob Stevens felt that option 1, should be worked up and considered along with options 7 and 8 during the consultation period,

as an alternative option, in the event that the permanent weight limit proves unsustainable.

He also expressed concern about the impact of HGVs using minor roads through the village.

He reminded Members that he had presented a petition to the Council meeting in December 2006 relating to local residents' concern about the consultations that had been undertaken.

During the discussion the following points were made:

- o The possibility of exemptions to a weight limit for agricultural vehicles should be explored.
- o HGVs will go via other routes which will impact on other communities and the possibility of appropriate signing from the Motorway to direct HGVs to more suitable routes should be considered.
- o Only a very small contribution to the cost of any works would be made by Network Rail.
- o There may be an opportunity in the future to use Section 106 Agreement funding from future development in the area.
- o Officers should ensure that any impact on school bus routes was minimised.

It was then Resolved:

- (1) That the Area Committee endorses the imposition of a temporary 7.5 tonnes weight restriction to protect the bridge's weak edges and substandard parapet.
- (2) That the Area Committee endorses a consultation process to inform a decision on the appropriate permanent solution.
- (3) That para 2.1 Option 1 should be worked up and considered along with options 7 and 8 during the consultation period, as an alternative option, in the event that the permanent weight limit proves unsustainable.
- (4) That traffic mitigation schemes should be introduced before the temporary weight limit is introduced to avoid HGVs using minor roads through the village.
- (5) That the possibility of exemptions for agricultural vehicles be examined.

11. Warwickshire County Council Response to Stratford-upon-Avon Urban Design Framework

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy which outlined key elements of Stratford-upon-Avon's draft Urban Design Framework.

The Urban Design Framework provided a strategy that was aimed at delivering change over the next 20 years. The draft had had extensive consultation and as part of that consultation, the County Council's response by Officers was presented for endorsement.

Following introductory comments from Rama Isaiah, Regeneration Project Manager, Members discussed several aspects of the proposed response and made the following points.

- The references to the proposed new footway/cycle bridge over the River Avon should be removed or amended to reflect the County Council's decision on the proposed bridge.
- In response to concerns about the need for a new civic/conference/multi functional building in the Town, Members were advised that the options included a major entertainment site at Bridgeway.
- There were some concerns about the implications for meeting future revenue costs of completed projects.
- It would be premature to comment on future proposals for the Cattle Market site until the outcome of the recently held Local Planning Inquiry was known.
- Some Members felt unable to comment on specific proposals as they hadn't had the opportunity to compare the response to the full document.
- The proposed reinstatement of the Honeybourne Railway Line had not been included in the Council's LTP because of many difficulties with the proposal. Members noted that the proposal had not been included in the UDF at the County Council's instigation.

It was then Resolved:

That the Area Committee supports the publication of an urban design framework to guide the future proposals for Stratford-upon-Avon and notes only the County Council Officers' response to the draft Urban Design Framework as set out in Appendix A of the report and refers the Committee's comments and concerns to the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy.

12. Provisional Items for Future Meetings

18 July 2007 Meeting

(1) Implications of the Childcare Act 2006 and development of Children's Centres

Report seeking the Committee's comments on the duties imposed on Local Authorities by the Childcare Act 2006

(2) Change to Indicated Admission Number

Proposals to change the IAN of Alcester High School
Technology College

13. Any Other Business

Closure of Stomps and car parking.

At the Chair's suggestion, the local members would consider re-visiting the issues to see if anything could be achieved. The outcome of the re-visit would be reported back to the Area Committee.

The Committee rose at 6.45 p.m.

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Chair