

The **WARWICK AREA COMMITTEE** met at **WARWICK** on the **21st JUNE, 2005**.

Present:-

Councillor Sarah Boad (Chair)
“ Marion Haywood (Vice-Chair)
“ Les Caborn
“ Alan Cockburn
“ Jose Compton
“ Chris Davis
“ Michael Doody
“ Eithne Goode
“ Raj Randev
“ Dave Shilton
“ Mota Singh
“ John Whitehouse

Also Present:-

Officers: Graeme Fitton, (Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy), Jane Pollard, Peter Hunter and Patrick Lee (Chief Executive's), Tim Howram, Sally Lightfoot and Lynne Upon (Education).

1. General

(1) Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors Ken Browne, Bernard Kirton and Tim Naylor.

(2) Members' Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

The following personal interests were declared:-

Councillors Les Caborn, Alan Cockburn, Jose Compton, Chris Davis, Michael Doody and Eithne Goode as members of the Warwick District Council – item 7.

Councillor Sarah Boad member of local Sure Start – item 4.

2. Public Question Time

(1) Petition – Skateboard Area South West Warwick Estate

Lewis Rogers and Richard Ferguson – presented a petition

Residents of the South West Warwick Estate had asked for skateboarding to be removed from the roadside on safety grounds. The proposal to build a further 600 houses would increase the traffic movement. The petition had been collected to ask for the Warwick Area Committee's assistance in providing a safe amenity for the growing sport. An estimate of the cost for

the ramp was being obtained and the Committee would be informed when this became available.

Councillor Raj Randev confirmed that he had received complaints about skateboarding on the road locally. The youths had come to him for help. The developers of Chase Meadows were to build a Community Centre and if the skateboarding facilities were included as part of that development, the provision could be achieved at minimum cost.

Members supported the proposal and Councillor Dave Shilton offered to provide details of the organisation responsible for the successful Kenilworth Skateboarding facilities who would be willing to share details of its fund-raising activities.

(2) A429 Guy's Cliffe – Speed Restrictions

Councillor Charles Stubbs, Leek Wootton Parish Council – presented a petition calling for a 40 mph speed limit

Since 1982, Mr. Michael Hill of Guys Cliffe House in the Parish of Leek Wootton and Guy's Cliffe had been drawing various authorities' attention to the frequency of accidents on the A429 road. Mr. Hill's own front wall had been knocked down four times during this period. His wife was involved in a minor collision near the turning into their drive.

Staff at Hintons Nurseries could remember numerous collisions outside the entrance to their place of business. They had customers who refused to turn into the nursery because the traffic was moving so fast. Staff exiting the premises in the evening rush hour and wanting to head in the direction of Warwick would make a left turn, drive down to the Leek Wootton roundabout and all the way back again, because to make a right turn was just too dangerous.

Bar staff at the Saxon Mill spoke of accidents occurring outside those premises at least once every three months. On one occasion two ladies turning into the property to join their eleven lady companions for lunch were hit by another car. They were so shocked that the entire group cancelled their table. In late 2004 a bartender who had been working at the Saxon Mill for three months could remember quite clearly three accidents. On May Bank Holiday Monday, 30th May 2005 there was a collision as a customer leaving the premises was hit by a car travelling south along the A429.

Further down the road, at Guy's Cliffe International Riding School, customers were amazed that nothing had been done to slow the traffic down. At weekends they had to wait a long time just to leave the premises, because cars ahead of them could not make the turn out safely. There was a particularly awkward, narrow entrance, with an automatic barrier to prevent horses straying onto the road. When returning from a ride from the Warwick direction, the horse riders had to line up along the road, wait for a momentary lull in the traffic, then canter across en masse heading for the narrow entrance. The line of sight to the entrance for cars travelling south

along the A429 was 81m long, which was the stopping distance for a car travelling at just under 64 mph. If a driver exceeded the current speed limit by 10% encountered a child fallen from a horse on the road, he/she would not be able to stop in time. This was an accident waiting to happen.

491 individuals had signed the petition to reduce the speed limit. Those signatories had all voluntarily registered their support for the following statement "We the undersigned being customers of The Saxon Mill, Hinton Nurseries or the Warwick International School of Riding – Janet Martinez, or residents of local properties or visitors thereto, hereby urgently demand that the stretch of the A429 road from the A46 roundabout SE of Leek Wootton to the roundabout just north of the BP garage be subject to a 40 mph speed restriction, to ensure the safety of customers of, visitors to and residents of the affected properties, and all other users of that stretch of road."

Also, Guy's Cliffe Masonic Rooms Limited and Guy's Cliffe Masonic Properties Limited had signed a similar statement on behalf of their 500 members.

The people who had signed the petition could not understand why this simple request was so difficult for the council. Once the relevant procedures had been gone through to obtain authorisation to change the speed limit, the cost to move two 40 mph signs a mile along the road and paint 40 on the southbound carriageway could not cost more than £5,000. There was no need "to change the environment", as evidenced by the A road running to Knowle. There was a view that neither the police nor the council would act until someone was killed.

Businesses were losing custom, customers of those businesses were having difficulty entering and exiting the premises, frequent (albeit until now thankfully minor) accidents were occurring on a regular basis, and large groups of horse riders, many of them children, were being forced to execute risky manoeuvres to cross two lanes of fast moving traffic.

And why? Because if the speed limit were to be reduced from 60 mph to 40 mph, drivers who obeyed the limit (as in fact most would did) would find their journey time into or out of Warwick outside the morning rush hour would be lengthened by 15 seconds.

Was saving 15 seconds off a journey time or saving £5,000 of council tax payers' money worth risking a life?

Councillor Jose Compton said that she had supported the efforts to reduce the speed limit on the stretch of road over many years. There were no reported injury accidents but she had argued another measure for determining whether a speed limit was required was by the number of shunts or minor accidents.

Councillor Dave Shilton supported the request for a reduction in the speed limit.

The Chair referred to a stretch of country road near Balsall Common that had a 40 mph limit. Her experience was that drivers obeyed the limit.

Graeme Fitton undertook to investigate the matter and report orally to the July meeting of the Committee.

Councillor Jose Compton asked to be copied into any correspondence.

(3) Difficulties caused by parking at Trinity School, Guy's Cliffe Avenue, Leamington Spa

Mr. James Sinnott, resident Wasdale Close, Leamington Spa

Problems were being caused to residents in the Guy's Cliffe Avenue area because of parking on both sides of the road near Trinity School resulted in single file traffic. This was a massive public safety issue.

Mr. Sukhdev Dhesi, resident Ravensdale Avenue, Leamington Spa

In addition to eight buses, parents dropped children off at the school between 8.15 and 9 a.m. causing problems in traffic movement. On occasions he was held up so long in traffic queues trying to exit Guy's Cliffe Avenue that he was too late to go to University where he was due to give lectures. Parents dropped off children on the walkway provided for the walking bus and when challenged stated that they believed that was the purpose for which the pathway was provided. That morning he had been forced onto the pavement by two buses. Similar congestion occurred at the end of the school day. It would help if parking was banned on one side of the road.

Councillor Chris Davis said that he was aware of the difficulty and had received numerous telephone calls complaining about it. There were two schools, effectively three with the children from Dormer School moving there. There was a need for the situation to be re-examined.

Councillor Raj Randev appreciated the problems but Mr. Dhesi had indicated in his statement that parents were ignoring signs and he wondered whether they would also ignore any new no parking signs. However, he supported the petition.

Mr. Dhesi understood that there would probably be a need to police any new no parking arrangements.

Graeme Fitton said that he would arrange for someone to observe the situation and to speak to the schools to see if anything could be done to explain the situation to the parents. He also undertook to report back to the July meeting of the Committee.

(4) Gaveston Cross Monument

Councillor Alan Moore, Leek Wootton Parish Council

This was a National Historic site, mentioned in history books, that needed to be reached by a negotiated permissive path.

The present County Countryside Access Manager insists that the Parish Council negotiate and pay for its instalment, and so far, his department declines legal assistance or the reimbursement of costs that might fall on the Parish.

Such a footpath was within the statute of the recent Right to Roam Bill, and the public would have the same right to use it, without restriction, as they do an ancient one.

Leek Wootton Parish Council felt it was the duty of the new County Footpaths programme, under the above Bill to provide public access, on its own initiative, to national sites within the boundaries, and not require the Parish concerned to do so.

Graeme Fitton said that there had been a meeting of the County Rights of Way Forum on the 14th April 2005. The advice from the Forum was that the Parish Council should reach agreement with the landowner and the County Council was willing to help the Parish Council with this. The Right to Roam legislation was not applicable in this situation.

Councillor Alan Cockburn said that the legislation applied to land that was 600 feet above sea level.

It was agreed that Graeme Fitton should bring a written report to the Committee's July meeting on permissive access, including the footpath to Gaveston Wood.

3. Central Warwickshire and Southam: Area Review of 14-19 Provision

The Committee considered the report by the County Education Officer.

Lynne Upton, School Inspector, made the following points:-

- In the Central Education Area 77% of young people continued in full-time education after the age of 16 compared to a Warwickshire average of 75.5% and a national average of 73%.
- Warwickshire and Coventry was the best sub-region in the Country for NEETS at 5.6% and within this the Central Education Area figure stood at just 4.9%.
- There were five key issues that the Committee might wish to concentrate upon:-
 - Vocational curriculum for 14-16 involving work related learning.

- Vocational curriculum for 16-19
- Provision of a bridge/lifeline for those schoolchildren who do not have five GCSEs at age 16
- Making the links between what schools offer and the labour market
- Ensuring that schools give impartial advice.

The following points were then made:-

- The aim to achieve parity of esteem between vocational and academic success was welcomed.
- Good vocational education was more expensive to provide than the traditional academic courses.
- Short term funding was available arising from funding for an action plan by the Learning and Skills Council following on from the 14-19 inspection and officers were lobbying hard for medium and long term funding.
- There was no problem in engaging in the process with larger employers but there was more of an issue in engaging with small/medium size enterprises.
- Young people would need to be able to make informed decisions, e.g. if there was a dearth in plumbers they should be made aware of this and if appropriate directed to appropriate courses. However, it was noted that in such cases it could be difficult to find people with the required teaching skills as they could earn more from working as plumbers.
- In Warwickshire efforts were made to offer additional provision for gifted and talented youngsters.
- The Central Education Area included the Southam area and although the report was not going to the Stratford-on-Avon Area Committee, the appropriate local members had been consulted.
- The report would go with the comments of the Committee to Cabinet on the 30th June.

It was then Resolved:-

- (1) That the comments of the Area Committee on the Area Review be forwarded to the Cabinet and the Local Learning and Skills Council.
- (2) That a further report be made to a future meeting of the Area Committee on the draft Action Plan prepared in response to the Area Review.

4. Area Community Learning Plan End of Year Progress Report 2004/05 and the Area Community Learning Plan 2005/08

The Committee considered the report by Area Community Learning Partnership.

The following points arose during the discussion:-

- The Help a Mate programme launched on the Packmore Estate in Warwick with assistance from the Area Committee was beginning to create the network required to make it successful.
- The intention was that schools would be brought into use all year on a phased basis with 2010 as the target date for all schools. This did not involve just extended hours but also extended services.

It was then Resolved:-

- (1) That the progress made in the development of the Community Learning Strategy and the multi-agency Community Learning Plan for Warwick be noted.
- (2) That the Area Committee endorses the multi-agency Community Learning Plan for Warwick 2005/08.
- (3) That the Area Committee agrees that the focus for initiatives to be funded from the Well Being Fund in relation to Lifelong Learning be the furtherance of the priorities identified in the Warwick Area Community Learning Plan 2005/08 in conjunction with the priorities identified by the Local Strategic Partnership.

5. First Annual Review of Area Working in Warwick

The Committee noted the report by the County Solicitor and Assistant Chief Executive. Members thanked the Warwick Area Team for all the support that they had received.

6. Warwick Area Performance 2004-05 and Area Business Plan Milestones 2005-06

The Committee considered the report by the County Solicitor and Assistant Chief Executive.

The following issues arose during the discussion:-

- It was noted that the issue of hospital discharges had moved from red to amber.
- The Business Plan would need to be revised to take account of the new Cabinet portfolios and Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
- Peter Hunter would seek clarification of the issue relating to extended school projects on page 5 of the Performance report (Appendix A) and let members have a written response.
- Peter Hunter undertook to let Councillor Les Caborn have details of the advice and help that was available to village shops.
- The corporate recycling scheme covered all major offices in Warwick and fifteen schools.

It was then Resolved:-

That the Warwick Area Committee:

- (1) Notes the progress made against milestones targets contained in the 2004-05 Area Business Plan.
- (2) Endorses actions and milestones contained in the new 2005-06 Area Business Plan.

7. Crime and Disorder and Drugs Misuse Reduction Strategy

The Committee considered the report by the County Solicitor and Assistant Chief Executive.

Patrick Lee, Area Community Safety Manager for South Warwickshire, gave a presentation on the Crime and Disorder and Drugs Misuse Reduction Strategy. The following points were identified:-

- His counterparts for North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth was Kathy Robinson and for Rugby was Steve Hussey.
- The draft strategy needed to be confirmed by the Home Office.
- The local priorities were fear of crime, anti-social behaviour, alcohol-related violence in the night-time economy and business crime (shoplifting).
- The national priorities were drugs, vehicle crime, domestic burglary, alcohol related violence and prolific and priority offending. It was noted that these were changing.
- Although the fear of crime was highest among elder people teenagers were the most at risk.

- Patrick Lee would check to confirm whether or not all the agencies had signed up to the strategy.

It was then Resolved:-

That the Warwick Area Committee notes the content of the final version of the strategy outlined in the presentation.

8. Well-Being Fund/Social Inclusion Fund – Priorities for the Warwick Area, 2005/06

The Committee considered the report by the County Solicitor and Assistant Chief Executive.

It was noted that the figure for the Social Inclusion Fund of £30,000 in paragraph 1.1 should read £50,000.

It was then Resolved:-

That members approve the priorities for the Well-being Fund and Social Inclusion Fund for the Warwick Area in 2005/06 as set out in the report.

9. Provisional Items for Future Meetings

The Committee noted changes to the items for future meetings, resulting in the following provisional items:-

26 July 2005

Warwick Area annual performance report against corporate headline indicators
Parish Appraisals and Parish Plans

Well Being and Social Inclusion Fund funding proposals

Appointment to external organisations

Highway Maintenance Plan 2005/2006 and five year list of structural maintenance schemes

Copy of Asset Management Plan – Social Services Department

Briefing by Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy on the Bo Sierra Leone development project – nomination of lead member

A429 Guy's Cliffe speeding restrictions – oral report

Trinty School, Leamington Spa – parking problems

Permissive Access (including Footpath to Gaveston Wood)

13 September 2005

Crime and Disorder and Drugs Misuse Reduction Strategy

Central Warwickshire and Southern Area 14-19 Provision Action Plan

Princes Drive Recycling Centre Re-use of Shop EXEMPT

22 November 2005
Review of Myton School's priority area

10. Minutes

(1) Minutes of the Meetings of 22 March 2005 and matters arising

(i) Minutes

Resolved:-

That the minutes of the meeting of the Warwick Area Committee held on the 22 March 2005, having been circulated, be approved – subject to the attendance list being amended by moving the words “Steve Cooper (Property Services)” to immediately before “David Carter” and correcting the spelling of Hussinatu Yumkella's name.

(ii) Matters arising

(a) Minute 3 – Bus Shelter – St. Margaret's Road, Leamington Spa

Graeme Fitton said that the bus shelter would be upgraded once a county agreement was entered into.

(b) Minute 6 – Car Parking Fees, Warwick Town Centre

Councillor Marion Haywood referred to the problems caused by the introduction of charges between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m.:-

- Disincentive to people coming to Warwick to patronise the growing evening restaurant trade.
- Residents without garages returning home at that time.
- Visitors choosing to park in the streets forcing residents to park further from the centre .

(c) Minute 8 – SIDS

Graeme Fitton confirmed that the four SIDS (speed indicator devices) were operable, however, only one stand was useable. He had asked for enquiries to be made into resolving the problem.

(2) Minutes of the meeting of 17 May 2005 and matter arising

(i) Minutes

Resolved:-

That the minutes of the meeting of the Warwick Area Committee held on the 17 May 2005, having been circulated, be approved and be signed by the Chair.

(ii) Matters arising

None.

11. Any other items

None.

12. Item Containing Exempt Information

Resolved:-

That members of the public be excluded under section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 from the meeting for Agenda item 13 on the grounds that their presence would involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

13. Exempt Minutes of the meeting of the Warwick Area Committee held on the 22 March 2005

It was then Resolved:-

That the exempt extract of the minutes of the meeting of the Warwick Area Committee held on the 22 March 2005, having been circulated, be approved and the full set of minutes of that meeting be signed by the Chair.

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Chair of Committee

The Committee rose at 8.50 p.m.