

NORTH AREA COMMITTEE22 March 2012
7.30 - 10.20 pm

Present: Councillors Nimmo-Smith (Chair), Ward (Vice-Chair), Boyce, Bird, Brierley, McGovern, O'Reilly, Price, Todd-Jones, Tunnacliffe and Znajek

County Councillors: Manning

Officers (City Council): Jonathan James (Head of Customer Services) Andrew Limb (Head of Corporate Strategy), Toni Ainley (Head of Streets and Open Spaces), Jo Ajayi-Obe (City Ranger), Andrew Preston (Environmental Improvements Manager), Alistair Wilson (Asset Manager) Sara Saunders (Planning Policy Manager) and Glenn Burgess (Committee Manager)

Officers (County Council): Jeremy Smith (Transport Strategy Manager) and Wendy Lansdown (Community Engagement Team)

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

12/21/NAC Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from City Councillor Kerr and County Councillors Manning and Sales.

Councillor Manning arrived from agenda item 7 (Open Forum).

12/22/NAC Welcome and Introduction (including Declarations of Interest)

The Chair welcomed the public and explained the format of the meeting.

Declarations of Interest:

None.

12/23/NAC Transport Theme including Chesterton Station

The City Council's Planning Policy Manager gave the following update on the preparations for the new Local Plans for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire:

- i. Both Councils had agreed to prepare new Local Plans that would guide development through until 2031. It was felt that conducting this work in parallel would ensure consistency.
- ii. Both Councils are encouraging residents to be involved in the process and an 'Issues and Options' consultation would begin in June 2012.
- iii. In terms of land at Northern Fringe East, the Secretary of State for Transport had recently confirmed her decision to take account of the development of Chesterton Station in the forthcoming train operating franchises.
- iv. Further details would be brought back to future meetings of the North Area Committee.

The County Council's Transport Strategy Manager gave the following update on proposals for the development of Chesterton Station:

- i. A project team had now been set up to work on the development of the new station.
- ii. The Thames Link train operating franchise was due for renewal in 2013, with the Greater Anglia franchise due in 2014. Whilst the early stages of any franchise renewal process were a good time to look at new infrastructure there would be competing demand for funding.
- iii. Whilst the County Council had committed the initial funding to the new station revenue would then be received from train operators using the station.
- iv. It was envisaged that building would start on site in early 2014, with the station opening in 2015.
- v. The station would be located to the south of Chesterton Sidings and have three platforms.
- vi. It was proposed that vehicular access to the station would be via Cowley Road.
- vii. Pedestrian access to the station would be via Cowley Road, the Guided Bus network and the residential streets to the south of the site.
- viii. Public consultation would take place in 2012 with a full planning application likely in 2013.

- ix. The timetable of the new station was likely to be:
- Up to 5 trains stopping at the station per hour
 - 1 additional train south to Kings Cross station
 - 1 additional train south to Liverpool Street
 - Cambridge to Norwich train to stop in both directions
 - 1 or more of the current Kings Cross trains going on to Ely and Kings Lynn

Members of the public and Councillors asked a number of questions, as set out below:

1) Resident: Questioned whether there would be any extension to Milton Road.

The Transport Strategy Manager confirmed that the junction at Milton Road and Cowley Road had been designed to cope with the new station and any new developments in the northern fringe. However this would be revisited as part of a full transport assessment. It was also highlighted that the 'peak hour' for the station would be earlier than for the road network.

2) Resident: Questioned whether the new station would be primarily for long distance or local commuters.

The Transport Strategy Manager confirmed that it was envisaged that 50% of the users would be existing rail customers who had previously used Cambridge or Waterbeach stations and 50% would be new customers.

3) Resident: Questioned who would actually own the station.

The Transport Strategy Manager confirmed that the project would be delivered in partnership with Network Rail. The County Council would provide the road and any additional infrastructure, whilst Network Rail would provide the station building. The County Council would lease the land from Network Rail.

4) Resident: Highlighted the need for sufficient vehicle and cycle parking and asked how the Council had modelled the likely impact on residential streets in East Chesterton.

The Transport Strategy Manager confirmed that a large car park would be located on the station site with up to 1000 cycle spaces. The Council were aware of the potential impact on surrounding residential streets and would consult fully with local residents as part of the planning application process.

5) Resident: Questioned whether parking controls such as yellow lines and residential permits would be introduced.

The Transport Strategy Manager confirmed that there were many options to consider and this would be done in consultation with local residents.

6) Councillor McGovern: Highlighted the current issues in Lovell Road and suggested that the new station may add to this. Questioned how much money had been allocated in the business plan to address road modelling issues and if the option of a relief road had been considered.

The Transport Strategy Manager confirmed that this would need to be looked at as part of the transport assessment. Money would be allocated in the business plan for this work and detailed costings would not be discussed with the Department of Transport in the autumn.

7) Resident: Asked what plans were in place for the Guided Bus line.

The Transport Strategy Manager confirmed that there were many options regarding the Guided Bus and these would form part of the ongoing discussions with the public and local residents.

8) Resident: Questioned whether there would be platforms on both sides of the tracks at the new station.

The Transport Strategy Manager confirmed that there would be platforms on both sides but that issues such as light pollution; additional noise and tany volume would be discussed with local residents.

9) Resident: Questioned what construction methods would be used to reduce the amount of dust produced.

The Transport Strategy Manager confirmed that this would be fully covered in a dedicated construction plan.

10) Resident: Questioned whether the closure of Fen Road would be an option.

The Transport Strategy Manager confirmed that the County Council did not currently have funding or plans for an alternative option if Fen Road was closed.

11) Resident: Highlighted that local businesses and families would be affected if Fen Road was closed.

The Transport Strategy Manager noted this comment and confirmed that there were currently no plans to close Fen Road.

12) Resident: Asked for more detail on the size of the new station.

The Transport Strategy Manager confirmed that after Cambridge, Huntingdon, St Neots and Ely; the new station would be the 5th busiest in the County. Within three years it was envisaged that 750,000 – 800,000 commuters would be using the station ever year.

13) Resident: Asked for clarity on the name of the new station.

The Transport Strategy Manager confirmed that the County Councils preference would be the 'Cambridge Science Park Station'. Discussions were however ongoing.

14) Resident: Questioned whether there would be a cycle bridge over the bridge near Ditton Fields.

The Transport Strategy Manager confirmed that, whilst this could not be funded through the station project, the County Council would like to look at ways of providing a cycle bridge in this location.

15) Councillor Price: Asked the start and finish times of the train services.

The Transport Strategy Manager confirmed that the timetabling would be similar to the current network with services starting around 5am and finishing up to 1am.

16) Councillor Price: Highlighted the potential for additional parking problems in Kings Hedges and Milton.

The Transport Strategy Manager noted this comment and confirmed that this would form part of the transport assessment.

17) Resident: Asked how cyclists and pedestrians would cross the busy Milton Road in order to access the station.

The Transport Strategy Manager emphasised the need for safe and appropriate crossings and confirmed that this would be looked at as part of the ongoing discussions

18) Councillor Bird: Questioned whether the old Cowley Road Park and Ride site could be used to ease any parking problems.

The Planning Policy Manager confirmed that this site would be under review as part of the Local Plan consultation.

19) Councillor Bird: Asked if Fen Road would be closed if the County Council found the funding for an alternative option.

The Transport Strategy Manager confirmed that the County Council were not currently considering the closure of Fen Road. If funding was identified discussions would obviously need to take place with local residents.

20) Resident: Highlighted safety issues around level crossings.

The Transport Strategy Manager acknowledged this point and confirmed that this would be looked at as part of the ongoing discussions.

21) Resident: Asked whether the new station would result in longer delays at the level crossings.

The Transport Strategy Manager confirmed that level crossing closure patterns would form part of the transport assessment.

Update on Fen Road Steering Group

The Chair confirmed that the first meeting of the Fen Road Steering Group had taken place on Tuesday 20 March 2012. The issue of level crossing and highway safety had featured heavily and this would continue to be a key strand of ongoing discussions.

It was confirmed that the issues raised at this meeting of the North Area Committee would feed in to the ongoing work of the Steering Group and regular updates on progress would be given at future meetings.

Councillor Todd-Jones suggested that an information bulletin, drawing together all of the current issues and ongoing discussions, could be produced and made available to the public. The Chair agreed to discuss this suggestion with Council officers.

12/24/NAC Tree Planting Project - Parks and Open Spaces 2011/15

The committee received a report from the Green Space Manager.

Members of the public and Councillors asked a number of questions, as set out below:

1) Resident: Asked whether the trees proposed for the church boundary at Chesterton Recreation Ground were new or replacements.

The Green Space Manager confirmed that the funding would be for additional trees and not replacements.

2) Resident: Asked whether the central planting proposed for Brownsfield Recreation Ground would infill the amphitheatre.

The Green Space Manager confirmed that the central planting would not would infill the amphitheatre but simply provide an enhanced setting for the orchard.

3) Councillor Brierley: Asked what trees would be planted on Nunns Way Recreation Ground.

The Green Space Manager confirmed that a variety of different stage canopy cover would be planted.

4) Councillor Price: Requested more detail on the structural layout improvements in Woodhead Drive.

The Green Space Manager confirmed that this would be boundary planting designed to give a more structured feel to an open space.

It was also noted that as part of the approved project list a neighbourhood letter drop would be undertaken so that residents views and concerns could be addressed prior to the tree works commencing.

5) Councillor Todd-Jones: Suggested that the committee needed more detailed plans of the planting projects in order to make an informed decision.

The Green Space Manager confirmed that this detailed work would normally be undertaken after the provisional list had been agreed.

6) Resident: Asked for more detail on the Brownsfield Orchard scheme and emphasised the need for public consultation.

The Green Space Manager confirmed that, whilst this was not a City Council scheme, the comments regarding public consultation would be fed back to Transition Cambridge.

7) Resident: Highlighted the need for the trees on Brownsfield Recreation Ground to be 'spaced' appropriately to minimise the risk of anti-social behaviour.

This comment was noted.

8) Resident: Raised concern about the deterioration of the verges along Carlton Way and confirmed that permission had been gained from the Highways Department of Cambridgeshire County Council to plant three trees in this area. The City Council were asked if they would be willing to provide these three trees from the current project allocation.

The Green Space Manager agreed to discuss this with colleagues and contact the member of the public outside of the meeting.

9) Resident: Raised concern about illegal cycling on the pavement in Carlton Way and requested additional signage to highlight this.

Councillor Ward (Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport) noted this comment but emphasised that the County Council would be unlikely to erect such signage.

10) Councillor Tunnacliffe: Questioned how the high mortality rate of newly planted trees would be addressed.

The Green Space Manager confirmed that it was important that the trees were secured properly and that aftercare and watering plans were put in place. It was also noted that a contingency had been put in place in case of any fatalities in year 1.

11) Resident: Raised the issues of oversized trees in Hawkins Road and the subsequent damage caused to pavements.

The Green Space Manager confirmed that older larger trees that had not been looked after could cause problems to pavements. It was noted that the City Council were currently undertaking a Canopy Study for the city and that it was important to have a broad range of species and sizes.

12) Councillor Bird: Emphasised that damaged pavements could cause issues for people with mobility problems and may result in accident or injury.

This comment was noted.

The Chair proposed that details of the individual schemes be worked up and that the Green Space Manager then liaise with Ward Councillors regarding resident consultation.

The committee agreed with this proposal.

RESOLVED (unanimously) to:

- i. Approve the provisional four-year planting schedule at paragraph 4.5 to 4.8 of the officer's report.
- ii. Consider, adapt and approve the list of proposed sites on an annual basis.
- iii. Request that the Green Space Manager liaise with Ward Councillors regarding resident consultation.

12/25/NAC Update on Street Scene Issues

The committee received an update from the Head of Streets and Open Spaces and the City Ranger on issues raised during the CB4 consultation.

The presentation can be accessed via:

<http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/democracy/documents/s11860/StreetsandOpenSpacesNorthArea.ppt.pdf>

Members of the public and Councillors asked a number of questions, as set out below:

1) Councillor Price: Asked how many enforcement notices had been issued for littering around the Tesco and Campkin Road area.

The City Ranger confirmed that four enforcement notices had been issued in the last week. However it was noted that the City Council only issued notices to people over the age of 18.

2) Councillor Price: Questioned why the City Council did not issue enforcement notices to people under the age of 18.

The Head of Streets and Open Spaces confirmed that, as non-payment of an enforcement notice resulted in a criminal conviction, it was not felt appropriate to issue these to minors. The City Council did however work closely with Cambridge Regional College to educate the students about litter.

3) Councillor Price: Asked for further information on the funding source for the additional litterbins.

The Head of Streets and Open Spaces confirmed that the funding had come from the Council's capital fund.

4) Councillor O'Reilly: Questioned whether local residents would be consulted on the location of the additional dog bins.

The Head of Streets and Open Spaces confirmed that consultation would be undertaken.

5) Councillor Todd-Jones: Questioned whether it would be more effective to have a dedicated officer for dog issues instead of giving additional training to the three generic Enforcement Officers.

The Head of Streets and Open Spaces responded that, due to the large patch to cover, three additionally trained officers was deemed better than a single dedicated post. It was also noted that the City Council still employed a dedicated Dog Warden.

6) Resident: Suggested that better publicity about the additionally trained Enforcement Officers may be beneficial.

The Head of Streets and Open Spaces confirmed that a combination of enforcement and education was crucial to tackling the problem.

7) Resident: Asked for further information on the City Councils work with the Probation Service.

The City Ranger confirmed that he worked closely with the Probation Service and regularly organised litter picks with up to 20 offenders. A Litter Plan was also being drafted to help address the ongoing issue.

The Chair thanked the Head of Streets and Open Spaces and the City Ranger for their presentation.

12/26/NAC TO CONFIRM WHAT WAS SAID (MINUTES) AT THE LAST MEETING AND WHAT WE HAVE DONE (ACTION LIST)

The minutes of the 26 January 2012 meeting were approved and signed as a correct record.

Update on Action List:

The Chair confirmed that the first meeting of the Fen Road Steering Group had taken place on Tuesday 20 March 2012 and the minutes would be made available on the City Council website.

The following issues were raised as part of the Safer Neighbourhood item at the last meeting:

- Drug dealing in Pearle Close
- Vandalism, drug use and sexual activity in Church Street toilets

The police were asked for an update and the Committee Manager read out the following statement:

“Pearle Close appears to have been a neighbour dispute with allegations on both sides, but no evidence of drug dealing. The toilets have been closed for some of this period but are being regularly checked, and there is nothing substantial to report.

Drug dealing in the Church Street area has died down and this may, or may not be, due to police activity. We are aware of a couple of ‘likely’ addresses and will continue to monitor the situation.

With regard to the vandalism of Church Street toilets these were closed for a period of six weeks and are now up and running”

The Chair confirmed that representatives from the County Council would be attending the North Area Committee meeting on 17 May to discuss Northern Corridor Area Transport Plan Funding.

12/27/NAC YOU WANT TO KNOW (OPEN FORUM)

1) Resident: Asked for an update on the planned improvements to grass verges.

The Head of Streets and Open Spaces confirmed that verges were the responsibility of the County Council. It was however noted that improvements could be met through the Environmental Improvement Programme.

2) Resident: Questioned why the £27,000 allocated for improving community facilities in East Chesterton had been taken away.

The Chair agreed to provide an answer outside of the meeting.

3) Resident: Questioned why, when Hawkins Road and other areas of the City needed more parking, that the Local Plan was suggesting garage sites be used for housing.

Councillor Ward (Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport) responded that the City Council was required by central government to compile a list of possible sites for future housing. Garage sites had been included but any future decision would be subject to full public consultation.

4) Resident: Requested more flexible timetables for Area Committee grants.

The Chair agreed to feed these comments back to the relevant officers.

5) Resident: Raised concern about dropped manhole covers and the potential for accident or injury.

A representative from the County Council's Community Engagement Team agreed to liaise with relevant colleagues to address this issue.

6) Resident: Suggested that a height barrier on Fen Road and a new access point for larger vehicles may be beneficial.

The Chair agreed to feed these views into future meetings of Fen Road Steering Group.

7) Resident: Raised concern about the pressure on school places in the north of the city and the future of the old Shirley Infant School.

Councillor Manning confirmed that he had met with the Head of the Governors and the Head Teacher at Shirley Primary School to discuss these issues. He had also invited Councillor Harty to this meeting but he had stated that it was currently too early to discuss the options.

Councillors and members of the public were encouraged to attend the County Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee in July where this issue would be discussed in detail.

Councillor Bird confirmed that she too had held discussions with the Shirley School and that a survey had been sent out to all parents to gather their views and concerns.

8) Resident: Expressed concern that July would be too late to have an influence and suggested that Councillor Harty be invited to the North Area Committee on 17 May.

This comment was noted.

9) Resident: Requested an update on the City Council's Register of Community Assets.

Councillor Ward (Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport) agreed to provide an update at the North Area Committee meeting on 17 May 2012.

12/28/NAC North Area Committee Participation Pilot: Review

The Chair explained introduced the item and explained that over the last year the North Area Committee had been trying out new approaches as a "Participation Pilot" for the Council.

Meetings had been structured in a different way and local residents were being given the opportunity to engage more outside of the formal meeting structure. Learning from the Pilot would be reported back to the Strategy and Resources Committee in July 2012 and shared with other Area Committees, who may choose to also take some of the approaches forward.

The Head of Corporate Strategy highlighted a questionnaire that had been placed around the meeting room and encouraged both Councillors and members of the public to share their views on what has worked well and what could be improved for future meetings.

Councillors Manning and Price commented that moving venues around the ward had worked well and suggested that this practice continue.

Mr Michael Bond commented that the 'themed' meetings had worked well and that the improved meeting format had resulted in better community engagement.

The Chair thanked people for their comments.

12/29/NAC Environmental Improvement Programme

The committee received a report from the Environmental Improvements Manager.

It was noted that any highway related schemes listed under section 4 of the officer's report would first require match funding from the County Council. Members were asked to forward suggestions for Traffic Regulation Orders to the Environmental Improvement Manager for consideration and liaison with the County Council.

Members of the committee suggested the following addition Environmental Improvement Schemes:

- Planting on Elizabeth Way Bridge
- Livermore Close into Nunns Way
- Path around Arbury Community Centre
- Buchan Street Paddling Pool
- Nunns Way edge to basket ball court
- Lighting for parks at night
- Kick about near Campkin Way Tescos
- Parking improvements at Hawkins Rd
- Verge parking outside Kings Hedges learner pool
- Buchan Street area additional improvements
- Cambridge Regional College to Kirkwood Road crossing
- Crossing between St Lukes and Meadows
- Earmarked funding for issues in Fen Road when discussions have progressed
- Brownsfield Recreation Ground

Councillor Manning requested that funds be earmarked for a conflict reduction scheme on the cycle bridge. The Environmental Improvements Manager agreed to discuss this with colleagues at the County Council as part of the Joint Cycleway Programme.

Councillors McGovern and Bird proposed that the hanging baskets in Chesterton High Street be funded from last years under spent budget.

The committee supported this proposal.

The Chair proposed that the Environmental Improvements Manager undertake feasibility studies on all of the suggested schemes and report back to a future meeting for final approval.

The committee supported this proposal.

RESOLVED (unanimously) to:

- i. Fund the hanging baskets in Chesterton High Street from last years under spent budget.
- ii. Request that the Environmental Improvements Manager undertake feasibility studies on all of the suggested schemes and report back to a future meeting for final approval.

The meeting ended at 10.20 pm

CHAIR