

NORTH AREA COMMITTEE

31 January 2013

7.30 - 10.00 pm

Present: Councillors Todd-Jones (Chair), Price (Vice-Chair), Boyce, Bird, Brierley, Kerr, O'Reilly, Pitt and Ward.

County Councillors: Manning, Pellew and Wilkins

City Council Officers:

Project Delivery & Environment Manager: Andrew Preston

Head of Customer Services: Jonathan James

Safer Communities Section Manager: Lynda Kilkelly

Principal Planning officer: Tony Collins

Committee Manager: Glenn Burgess

Others in attendance:

Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant: Jason Wragg

Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure: Councillor Orgee

County Council's Head of Assets and Commissioning: Tom Blackburne-Maze

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL**13/8/NAC Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from City Councillors Abbott, Gawthrop and Tunnacliffe, and County Councillor Sales.

Apologies were also noted from Pat Walsh (Balfour Beatty – General Manager) who was due to attend for item 13/13/NAC.

It was noted that Councillor Abbott had recently been unwell and the Committee asked that their best wishes be formally noted.

13/9/NAC Welcome and Introduction (including Declarations of Interest)

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

No interests were declared.

13/10/NAC TO CONFIRM WHAT WAS SAID (MINUTES) AT THE LAST MEETING AND WHAT WE HAVE DONE (ACTION LIST)

Minutes

Councillor Pitt requested that page 5 of the minutes be amended to read 'Downham's Lane Play Area' (instead of Downs Play Area).

With this minor amendment the minutes of the 22 November 2012 meeting were approved and signed as a correct record.

Action List

An undated version of the Action was circulated.

In addition to this, Councillors gave the following updates:

Recycling Units: Councillor Pitt confirmed that he had again met with the Executive Councillor for Environmental and Waste Services to discuss the issue. City Services were actively working to address the problem and the public were urged to continuing reporting any issues so that they could be rectified as soon as possible.

Waiving of information submission requirements for small community groups making funding bids: Councillor Pitt confirmed that the Grants Manager would be reviewing the requirements for area committee grant submissions. This would be done as part of the process changes, which will bring administration of area committee grants back 'in house' from the Community Foundation.

Probation Service: Councillor Pitt confirmed that successful funding bids had resulted in some community service workers now being used in the south of the City. It was also noted that, due to tensions between the Probation Service and colleagues in Huntingdonshire, Cambridge might now benefit from increased availability of community service workers.

Campkin Road and St Kilda Avenue traffic concerns: Councillor Price confirmed that the City Council's 20mph Project Officer would be installing automatic traffic counters to quantify the speeding problem through data capture.

With regard to developer contributions (minute number 12/66/NAC) the Chair confirmed that the following citywide projects had been approved by the Executive Councillor for Arts, Sport and Recreation and would now progress to the project appraisal stage:

- Logan's Meadow Local Nature Reserve
- St Andrew's Church Hall extension

13/11/NAC YOU WANT TO KNOW (OPEN FORUM)

1) Dr Jocelyne Scutt: Asked for an update on any planning applications connected to Mitcham's Corner and the related consultation process on the proposed 5 storey building.

The Principal Planning Officer responded that pre-application discussions were ongoing regarding a number of sites in this area.

It was also noted that as the new Local Plan progresses, more weight would be given to it when determining planning applications. However, as it is currently in its early stages of development, less weight would be given to it.

Councillor Ward (Executive Councillor for Planning and Climate Change) confirmed that, whilst each application would be determined on the planning policies in place at the time, it could become more complicated depending on the lead in time and the progression of a certain application.

The Principal Planning Officer and Councillors confirmed that four main sites had been identified at Mitcham's Corner, and were each at different stages in the planning process:

- Staples site
- 1 Milton Road
- Cambridge City Football Ground
- Manor Care Home

2) Mrs Blair: Requested that, as the Fen Road Steering Group had not met recently, an agenda item to discuss progress on Fen Road and Chesterton Station be brought to the March North Area Committee.

The Chair noted this request.

3) Mr Davidson: Highlighted that it had taken 3 years to get the Council to refill the grit bins on Nicholson Way, and asked for some clarity on the process for requesting grit.

Councillor Ward confirmed that, at the request of resident's groups or members of the public, the City Council would deliver bags of grit for use in local areas. It was suggested that requests be directed via the Customer Service Centre.

Councillor Pellew confirmed that ownership of the individual grit bins was unclear and that the City and County Council were working together to address the issue. In response to this, Councillor Price stated that City Council officers had confirmed they would arrange for bins to be refilled at the request of the public.

4) Ms Denny: Requested more dog bins in the Nuns Way area and more waste bins on Nuns Way recreation ground.

Councillor Pitt confirmed that new dog bins had been requested and advised members of the public to contact their Ward Councillors with requests for specific sites. Councillor Price noted the request for Nuns Way and agreed to follow up through the appropriate channels.

Councillor Brierley highlighted that dog waste could also be placed in standard litterbins and suggested that this be better communicating to the public.

5) Mr Sargeant: Asked if parking restrictions could be implemented close to the junction of Courtney Way and Gilbert Road.

Councillor Wilkins agreed to investigate this and feed back at the next meeting.

6) Mr Taylor: Highlighted the issue of broken and vandalised trees and requested that action be taken. The following particular areas were highlighted:

- **Milton Road near to the guest houses**
- **Frazer Road**
- **Midsummer Common**

Councillor Ward confirmed that a policy was in place to deal with this issue. Mr Taylor was asked to forward details of specific trees that needed attention and these would be looked in to.

7) Dr Jocelyne Scutt: Highlighted the danger caused by potholes on pavements and asked if the Council had a detailed programme for addressing this issue. The following particular areas of concern were highlighted:

- **Milton Road**
- **Herbert Road**
- **Primrose Street**

Councillor Wilkins confirmed that the County Council had recently invested £90m, over a 5-year period, to help address this problem. Whilst in its early stages, he did confirm that Gilbert Road was currently being resurfaced and bids had also been put in for Mitcham's Corner and Milton Road. It was also noted that, as it was more cost effective, the policy would be to try and repair trouble spots before they got to the stage of being potholes.

Councillor Manning suggested that members of the public contact their County Council Ward Councillors with specific areas of concern so that these could be looked at as part of the programme. It was also noted that Councillor Bourke was undertaking an Access Review that would look at some of the connected issues.

Councillor Price confirmed that Kings Hedges Road had recently been stripped and replaced and it was a vast improvement.

8) Mr Bond: Raised concern that the exhibition on Dog Control Orders was not very visible at the meeting and members of the public may have missed the opportunity to comment.

The Chair apologised but noted that, unfortunately due to other work commitments, the officer had been unable to stay for the duration of the meeting.

The Chair confirmed that Dr Jocelyne Scutt had submitted further questions in advance of the meeting. The relevant officers had provided written responses and these were circulated to councillors and members of the public.

13/12/NAC Policing and Safer Neighbourhoods

The committee received a verbal update from the Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant on crime and policing in the four wards.

1) Councillor Brierley: Asked whether the increase in the ‘other burglary’ figures (page 20 of the agenda) was as a result of a single group of offenders.

The Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant confirmed that, whilst it would be difficult to prove, he hoped that a number of recent arrests would result in the number of future offences dropping.

2) Councillor Wilkins: Asked for examples of the types of anti-social cycling offences for which tickets had been issued.

The Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant confirmed that tickets had been issued for offences such as jumping red lights, cycling on the pavement, cycling without lights and not responding to road signs. It was however noted that signage was sometimes confusing and inconsistent and this caused problems for both the cyclists and the police. Signage at Green Dragon Bridge was given as an example of this.

It was also noted that, with a view to improving safety, the police would rescind tickets issued for cycling without lights if people could prove they had subsequently purchased lights.

3) Councillor Wilkins: Asked if there was a way for the police to feed back to the County Council their specific concerns about signage.

The Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant confirmed that he would be happy to organise a walk around with Councillors so that problem areas could be highlighted.

4) Councillor Pitt: Commented that it was good to see the police monitoring anti-social cycling on Arbury Road and Milton Road, but suggested that Courtney Road should also be monitored.

This comment was noted.

5) Councillor Pitt: In light of the increased figures for burglary, enquired as to why cycle theft had been recommended as a priority instead.

The Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant confirmed that, whilst burglary was a higher priority, this was generally dealt with at a divisional level. As cycle theft was the number one crime across the whole city, it was felt more appropriate to have this as a neighbourhood priority.

6) Mr Sargeant: Asked if the new Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) would have an input into the setting of neighbourhood policing priorities.

The City Council's Safer Communities Section Manager confirmed that the PCC would be attending the next meeting of the Community Safety Partnership to share his views on priorities for Cambridgeshire. It was also noted that he would be asked his views on how these fitted with the neighbourhood policing priorities. It was agreed that the Safer Communities Section Manager would provide further feedback at the next meeting of the North Area Committee.

7) Mr Shaw: Highlighted 2009/11 figure obtained via a Freedom of Information request that indicated that cycling was safest at night. In light of this he questioned why so much police effort was concentrated on cycling without lights.

The Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant noted this comment, but confirmed that anti-social cycling and cycling without lights was a big issue in the City.

8) Mr Taylor: Raised further concern about confusing and incorrect signage, especially in the Milton Road area, and asked if the police were working with the Council to address this.

The Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant confirmed that the police did work with the Council on this issue. It was also noted that the incorrect signage at Green Dragon Bridge had now been rectified.

9) Mr Taylor: Asked if any tickets had been successfully reviewed via the court process.

The Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant confirmed that he was unaware of specific figures relating to this and noted that it would be a magistrate's issue.

10) Mr Taylor: Commented that some of the issues raised about cycling on pavements could be related to complaints about the use of shared space, as appose to people actually cycling illegally.

This comment was noted.

11) Resident: Asked for a view on the reduction in police staffing levels and the current use of PCSO's.

The Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant confirmed that he was unaware of current recruitment levels and therefore unable to comment. He did however acknowledge that PCSO's were a valuable resource for the police.

12) Mr Davidson: Commented that on certain roads other road users bullied cyclists out of cycle lanes. In order to stay safe they were then forced to cycle on pavements and risk being ticketed by the police.

The Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant appreciated the danger posed to cyclists and confirmed that the police were not 'anti-cyclist'. It was however noted that many of the issues raised by the public related to anti-social cycling and it was important that the police address this.

Councillor Wilkins confirmed that the junction at Gilbert Road and Milton Road was due to be remodelling in order to make it safer for cyclists and address some of these issues.

13) Ms Dockerill: Raised concern about the amount of car users still using mobile phones.

The Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant confirmed that a number of offenders were currently going through the court system and the police were actively tacking this when they encountered it.

The Chair asked if the committee were in agreement with the three recommended police priorities, or whether they felt a need to retain anti-social driving on Fen Road as a priority.

Councillor Manning confirmed that the police work in this area had been excellent but questioned whether there needed to be sustained pressure in order to keep the problem from re-emerging. It was also noted that problems were now being experienced outside the Tesco store.

Councillor Kerr confirmed that illegal parking was proving to be a big issue outside the Tesco store and asked if the Fen Road problem had simply been displaced to a new area. It was also asked if the police would consider 4 priorities instead of three.

The Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant confirmed that the problems experienced outside Tesco did appear to be caused by the same small group of people. It was however noted that offenders soon become wise to police presence in this and the Fen Road area, and allocating this as a set priority may not be the most appropriate way to tackle it. The police were already very active in this area and it would be more effective for the police to continue to tackle this as part of their everyday work.

Councillor Manning and Kerr were happy with the suggested approach and were confident that the police would respond to the issues as part of their day to day activity. It was felt important however to enthiasise to the public that this was still an important issue, regardless of it not being a set police priority.

Councillor Wilkins suggested some additional wording on the anti-social cycling priority to emphasise the notion that the Council and the police would work together to address signage issues.

The committee agreed with this suggestion.

On a show of hands the following three Neighbourhood Priorities were agreed unanimously (12 votes to 0):

- i. Arson preventative work to continue for the Nuffield Road area to support on-going intervention and investigative work.
- ii. Preventative and enforcement work to reduce cycle theft.
- iii. Anti-social cycling and cycling without lights – including liaison between the police and the Council to address any signage issues.

The Chair noted that at the West/Central Area Committee on 10 January 2013 a police priority regarding enforcement of the 7.5t weight restrictions on Newmarket Road was discussed.

Inspector Poppit had responded that enforcing the restriction was a specialised task that would require additional resources. In order to evidence the need for such resources, he proposed that a traffic survey or a local lorry watch could be undertaken.

It was suggested that the North Area Committee could be invited to share the priority in order to include Victoria Road in any work undertaken.

The committee noted this, but did not allocate it as a police priority.

13/13/NAC Street Lighting Programme

The committee received a verbal presentation from County Councillor Orgee (Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure).

The presentation covered the following points:

- i. The County Council managed tens of thousands of street lights across Cambridgeshire and most columns were at, or beyond, their usable life span.
- ii. The current lighting columns generated high levels of carbon emissions and were costly to run. Newer columns provided better quality lighting, lower emissions and were more efficient to run.
- iii. The County Council had approached the government for funding and has been allocated sufficient funds to replace 90% of the columns.
- iv. Unfortunately the original consultation regarding replacements was not as detailed as it should have been and the County Council were now looking to rectify this. Communities consulted on the original first phases would now be consulted again.
- v. The original maintenance contract was also too restrictive and more flexibility was now being built into the process.

1) Councillor Pellew: Asked if lighting in parks and in and around trees had been taken into account.

Councillor Orgee confirmed that, because of the limited consultation last time, this issue had not been fully addressed. However, this was an example of issues that needed to be considered better this time.

2) Resident: Asked if part time lighting would also be considered.

Councillor Orgee confirmed that an advantage of the new contract was that lower level and dimmer type lighting could be used in some areas.

The County Council's Head of Assets and Commissioning confirmed that all of the new lighting columns had the option of a dimmer switch.

On traffic routes there would be the following built-in 2-stage dimmer process:

- between 8pm and 12 midnight the light would dim by 20%
- between 12 midnight and 6am it would dim by a further 20%

On residential routes it would be the following built-in 1-stage dimmer process:

- between 10pm and 6am the light would dim by 30%

3) Dr Jocelyne Scutt: Raised concern that lower level lighting may result in pools of darkness that could be dangerous for cyclists and pedestrians.

Councillor Orgee confirmed that the public could email to him areas of specific concern and these would be looked in to. It was hoped that issues such as this would be highlighted through the new consultation process.

4) Dr Jocelyne Scutt: Highlighted the issue of streetlights shining through bedroom windows and causing a nuisance to residents.

Councillor Orgee confirmed that as the new columns were higher (6 metres instead of 5 metres) this could be a problem. However it was noted that light shields could be fitted, and any specific issues should be highlighted through the new consultation process.

5) Mrs Blair: Noted that some of the historic street lighting columns remained in East Chesterton. Residents have requested that they be either removed or put back into use.

Councillor Orgee confirmed that a process was in place for the removal of these columns but it may be more complicated if they were listed. Members of the public were advised to email Councillor Orgee with specific locations so that the issue could be looked into more closely.

Mr Bond confirmed that some of the older columns may actual be cast iron spin pipes, and not lighting columns.

6) Resident: Highlighted the importance of directional lighting and the use of deflectors.

Councillor Orgee confirmed that the new columns would use 'white' light, which gave more definition and reduced the need for deflectors. There would also be less light pollution with the new columns as the light was directed downwards.

7) Councillor Brierley: Asked if the new lights would use light-emitting diode (LED) technology.

The County Council's Head of Assets and Commissioning confirmed that LED was currently not economical enough to use on this large a scale. Unfortunately as the government funding was time limited it was not possible to wait for this new technology to come down in price.

It was noted that all new housing developments would be required to use the new specification lighting and in due course the County Council would adopt this.

8) Resident: Asked if the programme was scheduled to include East Chesterton.

Councillor Orgee confirmed that the programme would cover East Chesterton and take between 3-4 years to complete in full. Full details of the programme could be found on the County Council's website.

9) Councillor Bird: Raised concern that lower level lighting could cause problems for partially sighted people, and asked if these groups had been specifically consulted.

Councillor Orgee confirmed that the consultation would be as wide-ranging as possible and agreed to provide a full written response to Councillor Bird.

10) Councillor Todd-Jones: Noted that an information leaflet had been distributed by the contractor (Balfour Beatty) and asked if the County Council's contact details had been included.

Councillor Orgee confirmed that the first point of contact in relation to this leaflet should be Balfour Beatty. The Council's details were therefore not included.

13/14/NAC Proposed 20mph zone

The committee received a verbal presentation from the Project Delivery and Environment Manager.

The presentation covered the following points:

- i. £400,000 had been allocated in the City Council's budget to investigate the implementation of a 20mph speed limit on all residential streets in the City.
- ii. The project would be delivered over a 2-3 year period with the aim of reducing pollution, noise and road accidents.
- iii. If public consultation was positive, the project would be implementing in four phases:
 - Phase 1: North Area
 - Phase 2: East Area
 - Phase 3: South Area
 - Phase 4: West/Central Area
- iv. A full report on the proposed consultation process would be brought to the North Area Committee on 21 March 2013. It was envisaged that the consultation would include local events, exhibitions and leaflet drops to residents.
- v. Traffic surveys would be undertaken at 61 sites throughout the City and Councillors had been consulted on the specific locations.
- vi. The results of the Phase 1 consultation would be brought back to the North Area Committee prior to the Executive Councillor for Planning and Climate Change making a final decision on implementation.
- vii. A Project Board would be set up to provide a steer on various project related issues throughout the life of the project.

1) Resident: Raised concern that the cost of the new signage alone would be very high, and questioned how the changes would be implemented without causing traffic congestion.

Councillor Ward (Executive Councillor for Planning and Climate Change) responded that the project was moving forward as a result of public demand. It was noted that undertaking a full programme would be more cost effective than tackling the problem in a piecemeal fashion.

2) Resident: Questioned whether local residents would be represented on the Project Board.

The Project Delivery and Environment Manager confirmed that the Project Board had been set up as a management tool to help direct the project.

It was noted that a detailed report on the 20mph project had been taken to the Environment Scrutiny Committee on 15 January 2013 and was available on the City Council's website.

Councillor Ward (Executive Councillor for Planning and Climate Change) confirmed that local residents would be able to have a valuable input through the consultation process. Other consultees would include the taxi trade, local police, the bus trade and the Cambridge Cycling Campaign.

3) Resident: Asked what the objective of a 20mph citywide limit was.

The Project Delivery and Environment Manager responded that the objective was to rationalise speed limits within the City and therefore make it less confusing for road users.

4) Mr Bond: Confirmed that Old Chesterton Resident's Association had asked for a 20mph limit over 20 years ago and were therefore very supportive of this proposal. It was however noted that, as the traffic artery roads may become congested, the project needed to be managed carefully.

Councillor Ward (Executive Councillor for Planning and Climate Change) noted the comments but hoped that a citywide 20mph limit may make more people confident to cycle on the roads and therefore result in less traffic congestion.

5) Resident: Questioned what would happen with strategic roads such as Gilbert Road, especially as these were located near to schools.

Councillor Ward (Executive Councillor for Planning and Climate Change) confirmed that all A and B roads would be outside of the 20mph limit, and C roads (of which Gilbert Road was one) would be subject to the consultation.

6) Mr Taylor: Asked if the traffic survey equipment would be brought by the Council or be hired in, and if the results would be publicly available.

The Project Delivery and Environment Manager confirmed that an external contractor would be undertaking the surveys at a cost of between £60-£100 per site. The results of the surveys would be published as part of the public consultation.

The Chair reminded the public that a more detailed item would be brought back to the North Area Committee on 21 March 2013.

13/15/NAC Meeting dates 2013/14

It was agreed that the proposed 2013/14 meeting dates would be agreed by Councillors outside of the meeting.

The meeting ended at 10.00 pm

CHAIR