

EAST AREA COMMITTEE

20 February 2014
7.00pm - 10.10 pm

Present: Councillors Blencowe (Chair), Owers (Vice-Chair), Benstead, Brown, Hart, Johnson, Moghadas, Roberts, Saunders, Smart, Bourke and Walsh

Area Committee Members: County Councillors Bourke and Walsh

Officers:

Principal Planning Officer: Tony Collins
Head of Community Development: Trevor Woolams
Committee Manager: Glenn Burgess

Other in Attendance:

Managing Director of Stagecoach: Andy Campbell

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

14/10/EAC Apologies For Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Herbert, Kavanagh, Marchant-Daisley and Whitehead.

14/11/EAC Declarations Of Interest

No interests were declared.

14/12/EAC Minutes

14/6/EAC – Consultation on Draft Community Safety Partnership Priorities 2014/15

At the request of Ms Ann Sinnott, the Chair proposed the following amendment to the response to public question 1.

Delete all and replace with:

Detective Chief Inspector Sloane stated that the increase in crime incidents of domestic abuse reflected an increased level of reporting, which indicated that improvements were being made in raising the profile of this crime. In response Ann Sinnott cited evidence, including Cambridge Community Safety Partnership's October 2013 Report, which showed that the rate of reporting had actually fallen. Detective Chief Inspector Sloane confirmed that further work with the County Council was needed to tackle the issue

With this minor amendment the minutes of the meeting of the 9 January 2014 were approved and signed as a correct record.

14/13/EAC Matters & Actions Arising From The Minutes

An updated Action Sheet from the meeting held on 9 January 2014 was circulated.

Engagement with young people: Q&A at Coleridge School

The Chair confirmed that Coleridge Community College had been receptive to the idea of a questions and answer session and discussions were underway with the Principal regarding dates. Further information would be circulated in due course.

Norfolk Terrace pavements

Councillor Walsh confirmed that he had spoken with officers regarding additional funding sources and options were being investigated. Feedback had been given to local residents.

Eastern Gate

The Chair confirmed that there had been no progress on the feasibility study.

20mph Project

The Chair confirmed that, as it did not fit current policy, the County Council would not be including Ditton Lane in the consultation. As with Victoria Road in the North Area consultation, residents were however encouraged to feed in their views on Ditton Lane via the 'comments' section of the consultation document.

Mill Road Update

The Chair confirmed that all Councillors had received updates from the Coordinator regarding the Mill Road Sign and the results of the Traders Survey.

14/14/EAC EAC Meeting Dates 2014/15

The Committee agreed the following meeting date:

- 19 June 2014

The Committee provisionally agreed the following meeting dates (subject to further member discussion on the format of future meetings):

- 31 July 2014
- 11 September 2014
- 23 October 2014
- 4 December 2014
- 8 January 2015
- 19 February 2015
- 9 April 2015

14/15/EAC Decisions taken regarding S106 Projects

Improve Access to Abbey Paddling Pools from Coldham's Common

The decision was noted.

14/16/EAC Open Forum

- 1. Dr Timothy Grout asked what, if anything, would benefit the East Area of Cambridge in the 'City Deal'.**

Councillor Bourke responded that the Chisholm Trail would bring benefits to East area residents.

Councillor Smart responded that, whilst much of the detail was unclear, the City Deal, if agreed, should improve transport infrastructure for the benefit of the whole city. Improvements to housing and the ability for people to 'up-skill' should also be positive outcomes of the City Deal.

Councillor Johnson responded that the County Council were predicting that up to £500m would be available for transport infrastructure improvements. Concern was highlighted however on the possible negative affect on open spaces in the East Area such as Ditton Meadows and Stourbridge Common.

The Chair responded that the detail of the City Deal should tie in with the Local Plan and the County Council's Transport Strategy.

2. Ms Nicky Shepherd asked what was being done to improve secondary school provision in the Abbey Area and how local residents could get involved.

Councillor Johnson responded that, whilst the County Council had identified the need for an additional secondary school by 2018, a site had yet to be identified.

Councillor Brown responded that, as the majority of suitable land near to Abbey was actually in South Cambridgeshire, she hoped that discussions were taking place with the District Council. This was even more important as pressure on school places was partly due to extra residents moving into South Cambridgeshire.

The Chair expressed regret that the County Council had not publically identified this need for more school places at the time of the 'Issues and Options' consultation – as both the City Council and the District Council had not allocated school sites in East Area as part of their Local Plans. It was noted however that this could be picked up through the Local Plan Inspection process.

Councillor Roberts responded that Councillor Whitehead had been making further enquires on this issue in the last few weeks. It was suggested that Ms Shepherd contact Councillor Whitehead and request an update on progress.

- 3. Mr Simon Nuttall noted that cycle parking in Thoday Street had been discussed at length at the last meeting. Since then the pedestrian group 'Living Streets' had said that they support the proposals because it would help to keep the pavements clear.**

Mr Nuttall was grateful to Councillors Bourke and Moghadas for their time during which he was able to show them how the very narrow passages to back gardens made them a rather inconvenient option for parking bikes and did not cater for visitors. He asked if, since surveying local residents about the issue, the Liberal Democrat Councillors had reached any conclusions.

Councillor Bourke confirmed that he had knocked on every resident's door since the last meeting to get their views.

He confirmed the following:

- 112 responses (up from 31 responses last time)
- 68 responses in favour of cycle parking (61%)
- 40 responses against cycle parking
- 33 (of the 40) against cycle parking owned a bike— and 9 of those did not own a car.
- 4 abstentions
- 84% of those that responded owned a bike
- More detailed questions asked
- More detailed responses received

Councillor Bourke confirmed that he supported the proposal to progress with a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for two parking bays. This should not however be deemed as standard policy across the city, and issues should be looked at on a case by case basis.

Councillor Saunders highlighted the need to keep pavements clear for residents with pushchairs and those in wheelchairs or with mobility issues.

Councillor Smart expressed support for progressing with the TRO but suggested that the issue be monitored. It was also noted that Car Club parking bays were available in the Romsey area if required.

It was agreed that Councillor Bourke would email the full anonymised results to Mr Nuttall and progress the TRO with officers.

4. Mr Antony Carpen made the following announcements:

- **Morley School had Governor vacancies and would encourage people to apply.**
- **Distributed posters for 'Shape Your Place', 'Skills-Fest' and 'Cambridge Fabian Society' and asked that Councillors display where appropriate.**
- **Involved with 'Parliament Week' and would update the committee at a future meeting.**

Noted

On behalf of the Friends with Disabilities Group the Chair highlighted the Cambridge Cash for the Community Campaign and encouraged Councillors and members of the public to vote on-line.

14/17/EAC Stagecoach - presentation and Q&A

The Committee received a verbal presentation from the Managing Director of Stagecoach on the distinction between commercial bus operators and supported services.

Questions from members of the public:**5. Mr Gawthrop asked if the number 18 bus would terminate at Comberton.**

The Managing Director responded that as this route was up for tender renewal in April he did not know the full detail. It was requested that Mr Gawthrop email the Managing Director who would then respond in detail.

6. MJ Black raised concerns about the C3 bus service in Ditton Lane. The service is very unreliable and at times passengers can wait for over an hour for a bus. The need to alert passengers to changes in bus services was also highlighted.

The Managing Director responded that the changes to this service, prompted by increased congestion and the aspiration for a 20mph speed limit in the city, had been widely advertised. Information had been placed on the vehicles and adverts had been placed in the local press and on

the radio. It was noted that a combination of roadworks and changes to junction boxes may affect reliability of the service. MJ Black was asked to email the specific times and dates and the Managing Director would investigate further.

- 7. Ms Shepherd raised concern that, whilst the bus stop at Whitehall Road was no longer in use, there were no signs or notices to alert the public.**

The Managing Director confirmed that the bus stop was still in use in the evenings and on Sundays but agreed to look into this issue.

- 8. MJ Black suggested that A4 posters needed to be placed in bus stops that were no longer in use.**

The Managing Director confirmed that, whilst signs were always placed in bus stops no longer in use, the public did not take notice of them.

- 9. Ms Shepherd stated that a sign had not been placed at the Whitehall Road bus stop. It was also noted that, as many residents no longer receive a free local paper, they would not see any adverts placed.**

- 10. Dr Grout highlighted the improvements made by the 'real time' timetable signs.**

Mr Gawthrop agreed with this.

These comments were noted.

- 11. Dr Grout expressed concern that the Day Rider ticket had increased in price and highlighted the need to maintain the over 70's concessionary bus pass.**

The Managing Director confirmed that, whilst the Day Rider would increase again in March, there would be a price freeze on the weekly on-line ticket. Tickets would also be able to be purchased on-line. Support was expressed for maintaining the concessionary bus pass as a way to ensure independence and mobility for older people.

12. Mr Carpen expressed concern about the views of the Stagecoach Chairman regarding Clause 28.

The Managing Director explained that he had no control over comments made by the Stagecoach Chairman.

13. Mr Carpen asked why the on-line App was sometimes unreliable.

The Managing Director responded that, as the App was based on the timings of the last three trips to that destination, it could not be 100% accurate. Mr Carpen was asked to email the specific times and dates and the Managing Director would investigate further.

14. MJ Black requested 'real time' timetable signs in the Fison Road area.

The Managing Director agreed to raise this with Cambridgeshire County Council.

Questions from members of the committee:

1. Councillor Hart expressed support for 'real time' timetable signs in the Fison Road area and possibly Thorpe Way.

The Managing Director agreed to look into this.

2. Councillor Hart expressed concern that, due to an unreliable service on the Whitehall Estate, residents were walking to catch the bus at Newmarket Road. She asked if, as a result of passenger numbers dropping, the bus companies would use this as an excuse to stop the Whitehall Estate service.

The Managing Director responded that passenger numbers were not dropping in this area and there were no plans to drop the service.

3. Councillor Hart asked what regulations bus companies had to adhere to and what penalties were in place for poor performance.

The Managing Director responded that an annual report on performance was provided for Councillors and MPs. A target of 95% reliability was also in place but unfortunately this had never been achieved in Cambridge. The Traffic Commissioner also monitors performance and can issue penalties.

4. Councillor Johnson asked if the lack of competition in the city was a 'blessing or a curse' for Stagecoach.

The Managing Director responded that competition in an area can actually drive up costs as bus companies compete for drivers and therefore have to offer higher wages. These costs then tend to be passed onto passengers.

5. Councillor Roberts asked about the process of devising new bus routes.

The Managing Director responded that new routes tend to be based around housing developments and areas of growth. It was also noted that the Office of Fair Trading would not allow bus companies to use profitable services to subsidise less profitable services, as they saw this as anti-competitive.

6. Councillor Brown expressed support for electronic ticketing as cash payments can hold up a bus service. She asked if there were any plans for 'per day' electronic ticketing.

The Managing Director responded that this was currently being looked at.

7. Councillor Walsh asked what impact the introduction of car parking charges at the Park and Ride sites would have.

The Managing Director responded that the introduction of car parking charges could have a negative impact. The Park and Ride Sites help to keep cars out of the city centre, limit congestion and ultimately help to keep the bus services reliable. If people chose to drive into the city instead of using the Park and Ride sites, this would have a negative impact.

The Managing Director also confirmed that Stagecoach had offered to run the Park and Ride sites at no cost but the County Council would not agree to this.

8. Councillor Benstead asked what would help to improve reliability of bus services in the city.

The Managing Director responded that shared bus and cycle lanes did not work for either party and a reduction in these would help.

9. Councillor Saunders asked if a reduction in cars in the city would lead to a more reliable bus service and if a 'Car Free Day' would be beneficial.

The Managing Director responded that fewer cars could have an adverse impact on the commercial viability of the city centre. A careful balance was therefore needed. With enough notice, the idea of a 'Car Free Day' could work.

The Chair thanked the Managing Director for attending.

14/18/EAC Project Appraisal - Ross Street Community Centre Improvements

The Committee received a report from the Head of Community Development regarding improvements to the Ross Street Community Centre.

Councillors Brown and Saunders spoke in support of the project.

In response to questions the Head of Community Development confirmed the following:

- i. Work was being undertaken with the County Council regarding childcare provision.
- ii. There was a need for this additional childcare to be both affordable and sustainable.
- iii. Adequate cycle parking at the Community Centre would be provided.

In response to questions from Ms Shepherd and Councillor Walsh regarding the loss of childcare facilities across the city, Councillor Bourke agreed to look into the issue.

Resolved (unanimously) to:

- i) Agree, subject to confirmation of funding from the County Council, tender, relevant planning and building regulation approval, the project to improve Ross Street Community Centre by increasing space for childcare provision and adding a new kitchenette, toilets and storage.

14/19/EAC Planning Applications

14/20/EAC 13/1465/FUL - 6 Hooper Street

The Committee received an application for full planning permission.

The application sought permission for the erection of one 2 x bed dwelling, and conversion of 6 Hooper Street into two 2 x bed flats together with cycle parking and associated hard and soft landscaping (following the demolition of the existing garage building present on site and part of the single store rear addition to 6 Hooper Street)

Mr Michael Mulvihill addressed the Committee and made the following points in objection to the application.

- i. The previous appeal highlighted the loss of privacy issue.
- ii. Sense of enclosure and overlooking.
- iii. Loss of privacy and loss of amenity.
- iv. Not in keeping with a conservation area.
- v. Poor quality accommodation proposed.
- vi. Loss of the mature Cherry Tree.
- vii. Petition signed by local residents in objection.

Mr Frank Gawthrop addressed the Committee and made the following points in objection to the application.

- i. Proposal would be detrimental to neighbours.
- ii. Lack of garden space for new properties.
- iii. Questioned whether it went against Policy 5/2.

Peter McKeown (Applicants Agent) addressed the Committee in support of the application.

County Councillor Walsh spoke on the application and made the following points:

- i. Speaking on behalf of local residents.
- ii. Application is 'urban cramming' at its worst.
- iii. Would set a precedent for future developments.
- iv. Lack of car park provision.
- v. Loss of Cherry Tree.
- vi. Lack of open space and gardens.

Resolved (by 5 votes to 0) to grant the application for planning permission in accordance with the officer recommendation, for the reasons set out in the officer report, and subject to the conditions recommended by the officer.

14/21/EAC 13/1644/FUL - 56 and 56A Mill Road

The Committee received an application for full planning permission.

The application sought permission for a two storey rear extension and associated works (including changes to shop front) to combine retail units 56 and 56A Mill Road and to create 6 self-contained studio flats, 4 of which are new, following demolition of existing extensions and outbuildings.

Mr Crossley addressed the Committee and made the following points in objection to the application.

- i. Would set a precedent if approved.
- ii. Not against the idea of development but current proposal was too big and would result in 'cramming'.
- iii. Overlooking into the Gardens of Mill Street.
- iv. Site visit offered to developers but not taken up.
- v. Impact on future residents of noise and disturbance.
- vi. More detail needed on the refuse and cycle storage.
- vii. Noise monitoring needed.
- viii. Detrimental effect to a conservation area.

Resolved (unanimously) to defer the application pending submission of definitive details of cycle and waste storage provision.

14/22/EAC 13/1814/FUL - Land r/o 76 Abbey Road

Resolved (unanimously) to defer the application pending advice from the Environment Agency on flood risk.

The meeting ended at 10.10 pm

CHAIR