

WEST / CENTRAL AREA COMMITTEE

6 January 2011
7.30 - 10.35 pm

Council Members Present:

City Councillors for:

Castle (John Hipkin, Simon Kightley, Tania Zmura)
Market (Tim Bick, Mike Dixon, Colin Rosenstiel)
Newnham (Rod Cantrill, Sian Reid)

Co-opted non-voting members:

County Councillors: Brooks-Gordon (Castle), Nethsingha (Newnham)
Whitebread (Market)

Council Officers Present:

Cambridge City Council:

Lynda Kilkelly – Safer Communities Manager
Sarah Dyer – Development Control Manager
Glenn Burgess – Committee Manager

Cambridgeshire County Council:

Richard Preston - Head of Road Safety and Parking Services

Additional attendees:

Jane Darlington – Chief Executive of Cambridgeshire Community Foundation
David Sergeant – Police Chief Inspector
Jayne Drury - Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

11/1/WAC Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Smith.

11/2/WAC Declarations of Interest

Councillor	Item	Interest
Hipkin	11/10/WAC Oxford Road Application	Prejudicial: Lives near to the application site

11/3/WAC Minutes

It was noted that question 3 (10/51/WAC – page 10) had been asked by Mr Peter Constable and not Mr Richard Price.

Subject to this minor amendment the minutes of the 28 October 2010 meeting were approved and signed as a correct record.

11/4/WAC Matters and Actions arising from the Minutes10/37/WAC – Hoarding around the bus station

The Head of Road Safety and Parking Services confirmed that he had visited the site in the last few days. Unfortunately the developer's contractors had run out of stone paving slabs and it would take some time to reorder extra materials.

Only a small section of the work was yet to be completed, and the County Council had requested that the contractor reduce the amount of hoarding in order to make the majority of the space usable for the public. If this had not been completed within 1 week the County Council would remove the hoarding themselves and recharge the contractor for the work.

10/37/WAC – Huntingdon Road 30mph speed limit

Councillor Brooks-Gordon confirmed that a disappointing meeting had been held with County Council officers regarding this issue. Whilst they claimed to be unable to take any action against speeding motorists, it had been suggested that funding could be applied for in order to widen the cycle lane. It was hoped that a wider cycle lane might result in motorists lowering their speeds.

The County Councils Head of Road Safety and Parking Services confirmed that whilst enhanced cycle lanes had been proposed, the funding from central government was decreasing and the opportunity to access this may have been lost. The scheme would also need to compete for funding against other priorities.

11/5/WAC Meeting Dates: 2011/12 + 2012/13 (provisional)

The 2011/12 meeting dates and the 2012/13 provisional meeting dates were approved by the Committee.

11/6/WAC Open Forum

1) Barry Higgs (Friends of Midsummer Common – FoMC): At the last meeting of this committee, and following further consultation with residents affected and the Friends of Midsummer Common, the Chair and Ward Councillors were tasked with taking decisions regarding tree planting along the frontages of North Terrace and Brunswick Cottages. What decisions did they take?

A) The Chairman confirmed that further consultation had taken place and a revised proposal had been developed following input from residents of North Terrace and Brunswick Cottages and the Friends of Midsummer Common. This revised proposal had then been reissued to all residents for final comment. Ward Councillors had now approved the revised plan, and the Chairman would now also give his formal approval.

Councillor Cantrill (Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation) confirmed that extensive consultation on the original proposals had taken place over many months. Meetings had also been held with Residents Associations, Ward Councillors and Council officers to discuss the revisions concerning North Terrace and Brunswick Cottages, and residents were now happy with these proposals.

It was agreed that the revised plans would be added to the City Council website.

2) Richard Taylor: A further full public consultation should take place on these revised proposals.

A) These comments were noted.

3) Barry Higgs (Friends of Midsummer Common – FoMC): Much of the Council's tree plantings programme for Midsummer Common requires the felling or relocation of some existing trees to make way for new plantings. The Planning Committee on December 15th gave its support to all of these actions but FoMC was told that a "final decision will be made by the Executive Councillor for Arts & Recreation". Has that decision been made?

A) The Chairman confirmed that the tree protocol procedure had been followed for the proposed work to existing trees. A consultation process had been carried out highlighting the trees proposed to be replaced, transplanted or pollarded. Five objections had been presented to the Planning Committee, and they subsequently made a recommendation to the Executive Councillor for Arts & Recreation for the tree work to proceed as proposed with a majority vote of 6 to 1. The Executive Councillor had now taken this into account and had made the decision to approve the tree work to proceed.

4) Dick Baxter (Friends of Midsummer Common – FoMC): At the last Area Committee meeting in October, FoMC sought Councillors' approval to place a small secure tool shed in the Community Orchard and the Committee agreed that subject to approval by the Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation, they would be happy to approve this proposal.

Councillor Smith also expressed the view that payment for the shed would be better coming from City funds than as a gift from Berkeley Homes. As a result, FoMC put in a funding application to CCF and this is coming up under item 7 on the agenda. However, CCF have made it clear that they cannot make the grant without a Council letter approving the placement of the shed in the Orchard.

As agreed, Councillor Cantrill has raised this issue with the relevant officers, and I have spent today in discussion with the City Council's Green and Open Space Manager and legal officers. The officer's original view was that consent of the Secretary of State under the provisions of the Commons Act 2006 would be needed, but I have successfully reversed their view on this.

It is however still the view of the Council that planning permission is needed – which goes against the advice that I have received. I will continue to challenge this but would welcome the Area Committees advise.

A) Councillor Cantrill (Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation) shared Mr Baxter's frustration, and agreed that the rules and regulations that the Council needed to follow did not necessarily benefit the public.

He did however note that much progress had been made in the last 24 hours and the Council would attempt to tackle these obstacles and give approval for the shed as soon as possible.

5) Jeremy Waller: If this is approved, other residents living nearby may think that they can also place sheds on Midsummer Common.

A) This comment was noted.

6) Richard Price (Park Street Residents Association): On the 13 December at 4pm a male and female were shouting and swearing in the street outside of my property. The female then proceeded to urinate in the street.

I feel that the Licensing Act in Cambridge is failing to meet the following two objectives:

- **the prevention of crime and disorder**
- **the prevention of public nuisance**

A) The Chairman confirmed that a specific report looking at alcohol related anti-social behaviour would be brought to the Area Committee on 24 February. Officers would be on hand to discuss the issue in detail and inform the public about the work being done by the Police and the City Council as the licensing authority.

Councillor Rosenstiel (Vice Chair of the Licensing Committee) confirmed that strong action could be taken by the City Council if bad behaviour could be linked to individual establishments. He therefore urged the public to gather evidence on any venues that may be fuelling these problems.

7) Richard Price (Park Street Residents Association): It would be very difficult for the public to identify which establishments these people have been drinking in.

A) These comments were noted.

8) Jeremy Waller: What is the Council doing about punting touts on Garret Hostel Lane? They congregate on Kings Parade at the entrance to Kings College and confront potential customers aggressively.

A) The Safer Communities Manager confirmed that she had arranged a meeting with City Council colleagues to discuss this issue in detail. She would also be speaking with the County Council regarding a joint approach to the problem.

It was agreed that the Safer Communities Manager would report back to the Committee at the meeting on 28 April 2011.

9) Can the Council offer more leadership and assistance to the residents of the West Central area to deal with the nuisance, crime and disorder that result from late-night binge drinking in this cumulative impact zone?

In particular the following problems are increasingly impacting on residents:

- **Late night noise and loud street socialising in the early hours of the morning as customers disperse from licensed premises prevents residents from sleeping. This is particularly prevalent in Sidney Street, Sussex Street, Hobson Street and King Street.**
- **Breakout of noise from amplified entertainment particularly lower frequencies and base beat that carries during the night when background noise is much less. This can be especially irritating and liable to keep residents from working and sleeping.**
- **The late-night economy attracts amplified busking in the streets outside residential accommodation and extends the period of disturbance outside sleeping accommodation.**

- **The increasing number of vehicles dropping off and collecting customers from licensed premises adjacent to sleeping accommodation creates an additional disturbance.**
- **Drinkers using residents' doorways and shop-fronts as toilets leaving urine, vomit, excrement, used needles and used condoms. Drinkers emerge from licensed premises at a time when there are no public lavatories available. This mess causes acute problems to families with young children when they try to leave their residence.**
- **Litter and broken glass is strewn in the streets outside residential accommodation.**
- **Alcohol fuelled vandalism causes regular damage to resident's doors, gates and windows.**

The proliferation of licensed premises adjacent to residential accommodation attracts drunks who are not permitted access to clubs but remain in the area causing anti-social behaviour and alcohol-fuelled violence including assault on residents.

A) Councillor Rosenstiel (Vice Chair of the Licensing Committee) stated that new legislation was being discussed by central government regarding a possible levy on the night time economy. This extra income would then fund the extra policing required to tackle ASB issues.

Councillor Reid suggested that the Council write to the relevant department emphasising their support for this proposal.

10) John Lawton: The availability of grit to residents has improved. However, why are there five different email addresses on the website for requesting grit? The public would benefit from a single point of contact, and the ability to see if, and when any grit is available.

A) Councillor Reid noted this comment and agreed to liaise with the Executive Councillor for Environmental and Waste Services.

11) John Lawton: To receive the grit in bags would also be beneficial for the public.

A) Councillor Reid confirmed that the City Council had suggested that grit be delivered in bags, but the preferred method of the County Council was to deliver direct to grit bins.

Councillor Reid praised the hard work of City Council officers in communicating with local residents and ensuring gritting information was available on the website during the recent cold spell.

The Head of Road Safety and Parking Services confirmed that a shipment of grit from Ireland was due to be delivered at the beginning of next month. It was however noted that central government had the power to redirect the grit for use in other areas if their need was deemed greater than Cambridgeshire's.

11/7/WAC Community Development and Leisure Grants

The Committee received a report from the Chief Executive of the Cambridgeshire Community Foundation.

Friends of Midsummer Common (FoMC)

Grant of £850 to fund the group's AGM and to purchase and install a storage shed.

Decision: APPROVED (by 8 votes to 0: unanimous) subject to any further permission required from the City Council.

11/8/WAC Safer Neighbourhoods

The Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant presented a report on crime and policing for the three wards and made a recommendation of targeting the following for prioritisation in the forthcoming period:

- Continue efforts to reduce theft of cycles.
- Maintain focus on reducing anti-social behaviour by groups in public.

1) Edward Cearns (Christs Pieces Residents Association): What action will the Committee take to address the ongoing issue of late night vehicles, such as long distant coaches, violating the speed limits on Parkside and Parker Street?

A) Councillor Bick (Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health) confirmed that the 20mph speed limit in the city centre was relatively new and had been the cause of much frustration. Whilst it was encouraging to hear that the police had undertaken some enforcement action, it was felt that this was only part of the work needed to tackle the problem.

The Head of Road Safety and Parking Services confirmed that the County Council would be reviewing the effectiveness of the 20mph speed limits with a public consultation taking place later in the month.

It was agreed that the Head of Road Safety and Parking Services would give a further update on the consultation at the next meeting.

2) Edward Cearns (Christs Pieces Residents Association): Whilst I welcome this further consultation, I made these same points during the consultation on the core scheme last autumn. We need to take some action now.

A) These comments were noted.

3) Councillor Hipkin: It is noted in the report that 80% of all crime and 90% of all violent crime is in Market Ward. Plans are in place to further increase the population of Cambridge and this is likely to put more pressure on the City centre and increase the current problems.

This area is likely to become a wholly dysfunctional part of the City.

A) Councillor Reid confirmed that the target of 19,000 more homes for Cambridge was not a target of the City Council, and that City Councillors had fiercely opposed this. There was however a high housing need in the City, and new development control processes proposed by the coalition government would ensure that the public had more influence.

It was also noted that some of the larger developments aimed to establish their own secondary 'centres' in order to minimise pressure on the current City centre.

4) John Lawton: Further speed surveys are required as all of the previous results are now out of date. Speeding by buses is a big concern and I have continually struggled to access the data on this issue – it needs to be publicly available.

A) The Police Chief Inspector confirmed that the issue of 20mph speed limits had been raised on a number of occasions but unfortunately it was not an enforceable speed limit. Enforcement was also only one aspect, and elements of education and road engineering in order to reduce mean speeds was also required.

It was noted that national police guidance recommended that enforcement action should only be taken when the majority of motorists complied with the limit i.e. they traveled within the prosecution threshold of 23 mph or less. Limits should not rely solely on police enforcement to ensure compliance.

The Police Chief Inspector also confirmed that Neighbourhood Officers had conducted some monitoring checks in the area to support the pilot as indicated in the report.

Councillor Bick agreed that signage and education were important aspects of tackling this problem.

5) Bev Nicholson: Speeding by Stagecoach and taxis' seem to be an issue. Could they be reminded about the need for their drivers to adhere to the speed limits?

A) The Police Chief Inspector confirmed that it would be easy to remind the operators, but that it would be much more difficult to monitor this.

The Head of Road Safety and Parking Services confirmed that the County Council did conduct regular checks on bus movements in the City centre and that he was happy to make this available to the public. He also urged the public to report any specific incidents, including registration numbers if possible, so that this information could be reported back to the Quality Bus Partnership. It was noted that Stagecoach would shortly be installing technology into their fleet to monitor aggressive driving.

With regard to the proposed neighbourhood priorities, Councillor Cantrill highlighted recent thefts from vehicles in Newnham as an issue. He proposed that thefts from vehicles in the West/Central area also be added as a priority and this was supported by Councillor Reid.

Councillor Brooks-Gordon highlighted the importance of educating new students about not leaving belongings on show in order to reduce theft from vehicles.

Councillor Whitebread highlighted the importance of speeding and anti-social use of vehicles and proposed this as one of the neighbourhood priorities.

After further discussion between Councillors, most felt that alcohol related anti-social behaviour had a greater affect on the residents of the West/Central area than speeding motorists.

Councillor Dixon however felt that alcohol related anti-social behaviour was not an issue specific to the West/Central area and should therefore be a City wide and not a neighbourhood priority. This was supported by Councillor Whitebread.

In response to this, Councillor Bick (Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health) stated that City wide priorities would be looked at on a more strategic level and therefore not look specifically at issues such as those raised by members of the public this evening.

Decision: APPROVED (by 11 votes 0: unanimous) the following two priorities for the next reporting period:

- Continue efforts to reduce theft of cycles.
- Alcohol related anti-social behaviour (including both street life issues and the night time economy).

Decision: APPROVED (by 6 votes 0) the following additional priorities for the next reporting period:

- Thefts from motor vehicles in the West/Central area.

11/9/WAC Cambridge Community Safety Partnership Plan 2011-2014 – Priorities

The committee received a report from the Safer Communities Manager.

Councillors and members of the public were informed that they could respond to the consultation by filling in a form using the reply paid service, or registering on-line at www.cambridge.gov.uk. The deadline for responses was 14 January 2011.

The Police Chief Inspector gave a brief update on the five draft Cambridge Community Safety Partnership priorities.

As a member of the Cambridge Community Safety Partnership, Councillor Bick (Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health) decided not to take part in the vote on the priorities.

Decision: To show their strength of feeling on each individual priority, the Committee decided to take a separate vote on each:

Reduce Alcohol Related Violent Crime in the City Centre
– **9 votes in favour**

Reduce repeat victims of Domestic Violence
– **9 votes on favour**

Reduce cycle theft
– **1 vote in favour**

Reducing re-offending
- **5 votes in favour**

Reduce repeat incidents of Anti-social Behaviour
– **5 votes in favour**

11/10/WAC Planning Applications

10/0938/FUL - 25 Oxford Road, Cambridge CB4 3PH

The committee received an application for full planning permission.

The application sought approval for retrospective change of use from office to sui generis therapy room and office.

John Hipkin (Ward Councillor for Castle) addressed the committee in objection to the application. He then left the meeting and did not take part in the vote.

Belinda Brooks-Gordon (Castle Ward County Councillor) addressed the committee in objection to the application.

Resolved (by 5 votes to 2) to accept the officer recommendation and approve the application for the following reasons:

1. This development has been approved, conditionally, because subject to those requirements it is considered to generally conform to the Development Plan, particularly the following policies:

East of England plan 2008: Policies SS1, T1, T9, T14 and ENV7.

Cambridge Local Plan (2006): Policies 3/1, 3/4, 4/13, 8/2, 8/6 and 4/13.

2. The decision has been made having had regard to all other material planning considerations, none of which was considered to have been of such significance as to justify doing other than grant planning permission.

These reasons for approval can be a summary of the reasons for grant of planning permission only. For further details on the decision please see the officer report online at

www.cambridge.gov.uk/planningpublicaccess

or visit our Customer Service Centre, Mandela House, 4 Regent Street, Cambridge, CB2 1BY between 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday.

10/0805/FUL - 108 Barton Road, Cambridge

The committee received an application for full planning permission.

The application sought approval for a two storey front extension and installation of front and rear dormers.

The committee received a representation in objection to the application from the following:

- Mr Wahida

The representation covered the following issues:

- (i) Concern over the accuracy of the plans.
- (ii) Concern that the dormer and the rooflights would result in overlooking and loss of privacy for neighbours.

Resolved (by 8 votes to 0 - unanimous) to accept the officer recommendation and approve planning permission for the following reasons:

1. This development has been approved, conditionally, because subject to those requirements it is considered to generally conform to the Development Plan, particularly the following policies:

East of England Plan (2008) Policy ENV7

Cambridge Local Plan (2006) Policies 3/4, 3/14

2. The decision has been made having had regard to all other material planning considerations, none of which was considered to have been of such significance as to justify doing other than grant planning permission.

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The meeting ended at 10.35 pm

CHAIR