

NORTH AREA COMMITTEE

27 January 2011

7.30 - 11.20 pm

Present:

City Councillors: Nimmo-Smith (Chair), Blair, Boyce, Kerr, Levy, McGovern, Pitt, Todd-Jones, Tunnacliffe, Znajek

County Councillors: Manning and Wilkins

Officers: Liz Bisset (Director of Customer & Community Services), James Goddard (Committee Manager), Lynda Kilkelly (Safer Communities Manager) and Trevor Woollams (Head of Strategy and Partnerships)

Other Officers in Attendance: Paul Connelly (Locality Manager), Jane Darlington (Chief Executive of Cambridgeshire Community Foundation), John Fuller (Community Engagement Manager (Southern Division)), Joe Godwin (City Ranger), Wendy Lansdown (Neighbourhood Panel Liaison Officer), Andrew Limb (Head of Corporate Strategy), Ian Smith (Tesco Express Operations Manager). Ralph While-Paddon (Census Area Manager), Jason Wragg (Police Sergeant)

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL**Agenda Order Amendment**

Under paragraph 4.2.1 of the Council Procedure Rules, the Chair used his discretion to alter the order of the agenda items. However, for ease of the reader, these minutes will follow the order of the agenda.

11/1/NAC Apologies for Absence

City Councillors: Brierley and Ward

County Councillors: Pellew and Moss-Eccardt

11/2/NAC Declarations of Interest (Planning)

None.

11/3/NAC Planning Applications

No planning applications were considered by committee.

11/4/NAC Declarations of Interest (Main Agenda)

Name	Item	Interest
Cllr Todd-Jones	11/8/NAC	Personal – Member of the Co-op
Cllr Znajek	11/8/NAC	Personal – Lives opposite Tesco in East Chesterton
Cllr Blair	11/11/NAC	Personal and prejudicial – Member of Chesterton Festival Committee. Withdrew from discussion and did not vote on Chesterton Festival Committee funding application WEB 18601.
Cllr Manning	11/11/NAC	Personal and prejudicial – Member of Chesterton Festival Committee. Withdrew from discussion and did not vote on Chesterton Festival Committee funding application WEB 18601.
Cllr Nimmo-Smith	11/11/NAC	Personal – Member of Chesterton Community Association Personal – Wife gave garden party to raise funds as part of Chesterton Festival
Cllr Blair	11/12/NAC	Personal – Member of Friends of Arbury Court Library plus Milton Road Library
Cllr Kerr	11/12/NAC	Personal – Member of Friends of Milton Road Library
Cllr Levy	11/12/NAC	Personal – Member of Friends of Arbury Court Library
Cllr Nimmo-Smith	11/12/NAC	Personal – Member of Friends of Milton Road Library
Cllr Pitt	11/12/NAC	Personal – Member of Friends of Arbury Court Library
Cllr Todd-	11/12/NAC	Personal – Is a professional librarian

Jones		
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11/5/NAC Minutes

The minutes of the 25 November 2010 meeting were approved and signed as a correct record.

11/6/NAC Matters and Actions Arising From the Minutes

- (i) **10/68/NAC Matters and Actions Arising From the Minutes “Action Point: Councillor Pitt requested further information concerning the access to appeal process, for Police use of Section 59 to address speeding.”**

Councillor Pitt received a written response from Parliamentary Under Secretary James Brokenshire 19 October 2010. Details are available for circulation upon request. The letter states that the burden of proof resides with the person making the appeal, rather than the police. Councillor Pitt will take up this issue with the Police Authority as he feels it is not within North Area Committees’ remit to pursue it further.

- (ii) **10/68/NAC Open Forum “Action Point: Councillor Pitt undertook to liaise with Councillor Smart concerning winter gritting issue for City Council owned properties”.**

The County Council had agreed to provide gritting stock (such as salt and shovels) to local residents to help them facilitate its distribution. Due to limited stocks, the County Council distributed gritting stock on residents’ behalf, rather than to them. The County Council had not made a firm commitment to distribute gritting stock to residents, it had simply given an undertaking to do so where possible.

Closer City and County Council join up is anticipated in 2011. Resident Associations are invited to contact Councillor Pitt concerning information about, or to support, more effective gritting stock distribution.

- (iii) **10/68/NAC Matters and Actions Arising From the Minutes “Action Point: Councillor Ward to respond to Richard Taylor concerning his**

query regarding City Council protocol applying to trees, particularly in the north of the City eg Alexandra Gardens.”

Councillor Ward has been in communication with Richard Taylor as requested.

- (iv) **10/69/NAC Open Forum “Action Point: Councillor Blair to discuss issues of public art, environmental improvements and safety with Messers McDonald and Pyatt (Rackham Close Residents Association)”.**

Three different but concurrent projects are proposed:

- Public art project that will concentrate on the site boundary treatment for Robert Newcombe Court.
- Installation of lighting and safety fencing to the rear of the site.
- Implementing an environmental improvement project that would encompass the car parking area, the pavement and the resident’s car park. Project features would include:
 - Demountable bollards in front of each city homes/resident's space to ensure that use is restricted to residents.
 - Creation of parking spaces.
 - Creation of a footpath.
 - Some landscaping to enliven the environment.

Residents, Ward Councillors and Officers were working closely to follow up issues. The Residents Association was invited to continue to liaise with the North Area Committee. Councillor Levy will monitor the programme of projects in future.

- (v) **10/69/NAC Open Forum “Action Point: Councillor Wilkins to respond to Mr Arnold concerning his question: Why did the Council see fit to spend the large sums of money on the parking bays being built in Milton Road when white paint was an alternative?”**

Following consultation, parking bays were introduced as these were enforceable, whereas painted lines were not if drivers parked poorly. They were designed to be user-friendly.

Mr Arnold then asked why the Council saw fit to dig up the area to create parking bays in Milton Road? What action will be taken against people who drive over the path/kerb to access the bays?

Action Point: Councillor Wilkins to respond to Mr Arnold concerning his matters arising question.

- (vi) **10/69/NAC Open Forum “Action Point: Councillor Nimmo-Smith to respond to Mr Taylor concerning his question about the Jesus Green and Midsummer Common way the tree works consultations.”**

Councillor Nimmo-Smith and Environmental Projects Manager have been in communication with Mr Taylor as requested.

- (vii) **10/69/NAC Open Forum “Action Point: Councillor McGovern to respond to Mr Bond concerning his question: Does the City council get any compensatory payment for Council Tax forgone on premises occupied by students?”**

Councillor McGovern has responded to Mr Bond.

It has been noted that there is an issue that students are not in residence during the main census count, so a second has been organised to ensure the full allocation is correct for the Council Tax allocation.

- (viii) **10/70/NAC Discussion Concerning Local Matters Relating to Tesco Express in East Chesterton “Action Point: Councillor Nimmo-Smith to invite a Tesco representative, such as Ian Smith (Express Operations Manager) to new year North Area Committee meeting.”**

This is covered by agenda item 11/8/NAC.

- (ix) **10/61/NAC Policing and Safer Neighbourhoods “Action Point: Councillor Nimmo-Smith requested a seasonal breakdown of violent crime figures to ascertain if NAC should take on a priority based on trends.”**

This is covered by report for agenda item 11/9/NAC.

- (x) **10/72/NAC Cambridge Community Safety Partnership (CCSP) Plan 2011-2014 “Action Point: Liz Bisset to respond to Councillor Manning concerning how cuts to Cambridgeshire County Council outreach staff affect the work of Cambridge Community Safety Partnership.”**

From Locality Manager Paul Connelly County Council: As part of the response to the budget pressures the County Council has undertaken a process to integrate the Youth and Connexions services. Across the city this will lead to a reduction of 8 staff from 26.3 posts to 18.3. This includes staff working in an 'outreach' capacity.

This reduction will mean that the emphasis of the work will become more targeted towards those young people most in need. It is not envisaged that targeted partnership work or projects supported by the Cambridge Community Safety Partnership will necessarily be put at risk as long as the funding from the Partnership remains available, as this work tends to be focussed on vulnerable young people.

However, as the core work of the County Council becomes more targeted, this will put some current open access youth club activity at risk. The County Council is actively engaging with the City Council, partner agencies and other providers to explore ways to secure this type of provision. One of the potential impacts of this could be an increase in anti-social behaviour where open access services have been withdrawn. But it is difficult to predict at this stage what the precise impact will be as funding levels across partner agencies remain uncertain.

11/7/NAC Open Forum

- 1. Mr Arnold observed the County Council had repaired potholes, but a number of these have reopened. He asked if the repairs were appropriate ie emergency or long term repairs.**

Councillor Wilkins said that only emergency repairs had been made.

Action Point: Councillor Wilkins to respond to Mr Arnold concerning his 'open forum' question: "The County Council has made emergency repairs to a number of potholes. Has this led to a higher number of claims against the County Council?"

Action Point: Councillor Wilkins to also invite County Officer to speak at next North Area Committee on this subject.

- 2. Mr Arnold asked if the owner of the land along the riverside had been identified so mooring charges can be levied.**

The Highways Agency owns the highways and pavement, but not the sub-soil underneath (including the bank). The lack of clarity concerning land ownership has been an issue of contention pre-1970 between the City Council and Town & City Gas Company. Until the owner is identified, charges are not expected to be levied due to anticipated legal implications from an appeal.

3. Mr Taylor requested an information update on Wessex Place passageway.

Councillor Todd-Jones attended a resident and councillor meeting. The building on the corner is closed, but the NHS property owner is looking for new users. The site may go on the open market if a new user is not found. NHS Cambridgeshire were aware of safety issues, although maintenance was an on-going issue. The passageway is protected by a covenant.

11/8/NAC Discussion Concerning Local Matters Relating to Tesco Express in East Chesterton

The committee received an oral report from the Tesco Express Operations Manager regarding issues relating to East Chesterton Tesco Express.

Councillors Blair, Nimmo-Smith and Znajek met with Mr Bond and Tesco representatives to discuss issues relating to East Chesterton Tesco Express in late 2010. Tesco had taken on-board issues raised in discussions, particularly the volume of deliveries.

Tesco invited a Risk Assessment Officer to look at the delivery issue. The Risk Assessment Officer suggested consolidating deliveries to reduce the number from 31 to 17 per week. The new schedule has commenced, and Tesco aim to move from 31 to 17 deliveries per week for fresh and ambient food by late March 2011. Deliveries for frozen food and tobacco will be consolidated in future.

Tesco have found that the consolidated delivery schedule has had a positive impact on cost, transportation fuel usage and store operating efficiency. As such, they hope to roll out this method of operation to other stores. The North Area Committee supported this proposal and thanked the Tesco Express Operations Manager and East Chesterton Tesco Express staff for their responsiveness.

11/9/NAC Policing and Safer Neighbourhoods

The committee received a report from the Safer Communities Manager and Sergeant Wragg regarding policing and safer neighbourhoods trends.

The report and outlined actions taken since the Committee on 30 September 2010. The current emerging issues for each ward were also highlighted (see report for full details). They covered anti-social driving in the Fen Road traffic calmed area, unlawful parking and associated anti-social behaviour – the Shirley School (East Chesterton), sex working and associated anti-social behaviour – Histon Road, seasonality of violent crime (City north) and emerging issues/neighbourhood trends.

The Safer Communities Manager reported that the Community Safety Partnership has Cambridge has agreed to focus on the following three priorities:

- (i) Reduce Alcohol Related Violent Crime in the City Centre.
- (ii) Reduce repeat victims of Domestic Violence.
- (iii) Reduce repeat incidents of Anti-social Behaviour.

The Community Safety Partnership Board also agreed to adopt 'reducing re-offending' as another priority in 2011/12.

A draft strategy will be presented to the Community Safety Partnership Board 3 February 2011.

The Safer Communities Manager undertook to update the North Area Committee in future concerning Community Safety Partnership priorities and progress.

The committee made the following comments on local issues in response to the Policing and Safer Neighbourhoods Report from the Safer Communities Manager and Sergeant Wragg:

- (i) Violent crime in area around Minerva Way.
- (ii) Antisocial behaviour in area around Hawkins Road.

- (iii) Antisocial behaviour related to the hostel in Victoria Road.
- (iv) Antisocial behaviour in area around North Area schools.
- (v) Noted mismatch between report and table text.

Action Point: The Safer Communities Manager and Community Engagement Manager (Southern Division) will review, revise and update statistics in January 2011 Policing and Safer Neighbourhoods Report.

Members of the public asked a number of questions, as set out below.

1. **Mr Taylor asked if discussions from police surgeries and ward based meetings could be reported back to the North Area Committee.**

Sergeant Wragg said that monthly surgeries occur between residents, ward councillors and the police. These feed into ward based priorities set out in the police report to Area Committee. He suggested residents may wish to attend surgeries where possible, and also signposted e-cops as another way to obtain updates.

Councillor Blair said that Neighbourhood Action Groups were open to all residents in a ward. Councillor Nimmo-Smith added that the North Area Committee discussed and advised priorities, but it was up to the Neighbourhood Action Group to accept/agree these as priorities, then discuss how to implement resources accordingly. The Community Engagement Manager (Southern Division) said the Neighbourhood Action Groups were executive meetings that were treated as business meetings, where items such as tactics were discussed. Due to this, the meetings could not be open to the general public (just ward residents), and some items in particular would be confidential. However, results of group discussions were published.

2. **Ms Mears asked if tactics to address the issue of sex workers in Histon Road focussed on the sex workers rather than male associates.**

Sergeant Wragg answered most of the anti social behaviour issues were caused by the sex workers rather than male associates. The situation will be monitored, including kerb crawling (low level issue at present).

Action Point: Sergeant Wragg to liaise with Councillor Pitt concerning anti-social behaviour connected to hostel in Victoria Road and efforts to tackle this.

The following priorities were unanimously **agreed**:

- (i) Continuation of work to reduce the impact of school run traffic related issues at the Shirley School.
- (ii) Continuation of work to tackle issues related to sex worker activity in the Histon Road area.
- (iii) (New priority) Work to tackle issues related to anti-social behaviour connected to hostel in Victoria Road.

11/10/NAC Census 2011 - Presentation from Census Area Manager

The committee received an oral presentation from the Census Area Manager regarding the 2011 census process.

In response to questions from members of the public, the Census Area Manager said:

- (i) Whitehall are yet to announce if the 2011 census will be the last one.
- (ii) The end date for completing forms is 27 March 2011. Census staff will follow up uncompleted forms 6 – 27 April to seek their completion. Census officers will also work with carers to help people complete forms. The census website <http://2011.census.gov.uk/> gives information on how assistance can be sought.
- (iii) The census is available in different media, such as Braille. The form can also be completed in stages on-line.
- (iv) Reassured the committee and the public present that robust processes were in place for the management of personal information. It was also confirmed that personal information would not be shared or transfer to other organisations.

11/11/NAC Community Development and Leisure Grants

The committee received a report from the Chief Executive of Cambridgeshire Community Foundation regarding Community Development and Leisure Grants.

Members considered applications for grants set out in the report. The Chief Executive of Cambridgeshire Community Foundation responded to member's questions about individual projects and what funding aimed to achieve.

Resolved (unanimously) to approve the grant allocations as listed below for King's Hedges Brownies, St Andrew's Hall and Kings Hedges Family Support Project.

Resolved (unanimously) to approve the grant allocation as listed below for Meadows Children and Family Wing, with the additional condition that the Chief Executive of Cambridgeshire Community Foundation (or a nominated officer) will check to ensure that the project is not ineligible for funding having already received City Council funding during the 2010/11 financial year.

Resolved (10 votes to 0 votes) to approve the grant allocations as listed below for Chesterton Festival Committee.

Councillors Blair and Manning withdrew from the meeting for the Chesterton Festival Committee project discussion and did not participate in the decision making for this item.

Community Development current applications.				Available: £8,366	
CCF ID	Group	Project	Requested £	Recommended from 2010/11 Area Committee Grants £	Offer from other CCF funds £
2820	King's Hedges Brownies	To buy materials for arts and crafts and for a trip to Woburn Safari in March 2011.	700	700	0

WEB 18001	St Andrew's Hall, Chesterton	To refurbish the meeting room.	2,522	2,522	0
WEB 18402	Kings Hedges Family Support Project	To buy toys for children with special needs.	653	653	0
WEB18 290	Meadows Children and Family Wing	To pay for 9 hours of family support.	816	0	0
WEB 18601	Chesterton Festival Committee	Costs of Chesterton Festival 2011.	3,402	£268 from the 10/11 budget (and £3,134 from the 11/12 budget)	0
Total			7,693	£4,143	0
Remaining				£4,223	

11/12/NAC County Council Library Service

County Councillor Sir Peter Brown and Officers sent apologies that they would not be able to attend this committee.

The committee received an oral report from Councillor Wilkins regarding his understanding of the current position concerning County Council library services.

The County Cabinet considered a budget proposal 25 January 2011, which suggested that 2 of 5 libraries in Cambridge (excluding Central Library) could be closed in order to cut costs. This could affect Milton Road, Rock Road and Arbury Court Libraries in particular.

A Library Service Review Report has been written setting out actions, proposals and expected cost savings.

Members of the North Area Committee and public expressed grave reservations concerning the proposed library service cuts set out in the Library Service Review Report, and expected impact on local communities. The consensus of opinion was that libraries were important for education and learning, the City could not afford to lose these facilities. Meetings at local libraries were signposted to muster support to voice concerns about the Library Service Review Report proposals.

The Committee agreed to bring back an agenda item to the next Area Committee on library services to:

- (i) Express concern about Library Service Review Report proposals.
- (ii) Point out the differing needs of rural and urban areas for library services, as the County Council appear to be taking a generic approach.
- (iii) Discuss land use protection afforded in the Cambridge Local Plan (2006), and whether this has an impact on libraries.

Action Point: Councillor Nimmo-Smith to invite County Council Member/Officer to next North Area Committee meeting to discuss county library service.

11/13/NAC Area Committees and the North Area Participation Pilot

The committee received a report from the Strategy Officer presented by the Director of Customer & Community Services and the Head of Strategy and Partnerships, regarding Community Empowerment and Local Participation in Decision Making.

The Council wants to extend the participation and involvement of residents in its decision-making, increasing their influence over what happens locally.

North Area Committee has been selected as a pilot to try out new ways of working that will encourage the engagement of local people and allow a wider range of decisions to be taken locally.

The Officer's report asked members of the committee to agree how they will run the pilot and the approaches they wished to trial. The substantive decision on how to take the pilot work forward would be taken at the March committee post publication of the Localism Bill.

A questionnaire was circulated in the meeting setting out the following propositions:

(i) **Freeing up time in meetings and making them more informal**

The Officer's report proposed that members move the consideration of planning applications into separate meetings to avoid having conflicting approaches, between formal and informal sessions, in the Pilot.

Q.1. What do you think about planning applications being considered in separate sessions?

(ii) **Running a Community Workshop to agree local priorities**

The officer's report proposed that members hold a Community Workshop to find out more about local priorities for improvement in the area and those that are most important to the community as a whole. The themes will come from a Community Profile and feedback will be provided in the form of a Community Plan, summarising the priorities.

Q.2. What do you think about a Community Workshop event leading to a community plan? Who do you think should get involved in this event and how can people who don't usually take part be involved?

(iii) **Holding Café type meetings to create an informal and creative atmosphere**

The Officer's report proposed that members adopt the Café type meeting to encourage people to think about a matter and give a view. A room will be set up, ideally with small tables for people to sit around, where discussions can take place within small groups in a relaxed atmosphere. Members would sit in the audience with only the Chair and facilitator at the front. The facilitator will ask for contributions but the Chair will direct the meeting and members will still ratify any recommendations.

Q.3 What do you think about Café type meetings and what matters should they cover?

(iv) **Using surgeries at the start of meetings**

The Officer's report proposed that members and officers attend surgeries to discuss individual problems before meetings start, for a set time.

Q.4. What do you think about the surgery approach and should this be a feature of all meetings?

(v) **Reaching out to people**

The report proposed that Members reach out to groups of local people and perhaps try pairing up with some officers or community representatives who have contact with under-represented groups, to listen to the views of people they are in contact with and then bring them back to meetings. Walk and Talk meetings could be tried. These would be open to all to join in and provide a local forum for talking about issues. The committee could also use Facebook and Twitter to keep people informed about what is going on.

Q.5. How do you think the committee should reach out to groups to promote the Pilot and encourage under represented people to have their say? Do you think it should meet in different venues?

(vi) **Making things happen**

The report proposed that a senior officer from the Council is designated to help shape agenda with the Chair and looks to “make things happen”, so that agreed actions are followed up and feedback is provided to local people. This officer could be a “single point of contact” for the meeting.

Q.6. What do you think about the role a senior officer might play in an Area Committee?

Officers currently follow up actions (published on North Area Committee webpage), co-ordinate with partners etc. The pilot will look at how to improve the process.

Q.7. Other Comments you wish to make about North Area Committee and how it can do things differently – to get more people involved.

Members of the public were invited to complete a copy of the questionnaire and return it to an officer or councillor at their convenience. The responses would be summarised and presented back at the next committee meeting.

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

1. **Mr Bond supported considering planning applications and ‘main agenda items’ in a single meeting. He asked if all regulatory decisions would pass to Area Committees ie planning and licensing.**

Councillor Boyce said that it may be possible to delegate licensing matters in future when the revision to the Licensing Bill goes through, but it was not possible at present. However, the council constitution does allow for separate meetings for contentious planning items.

2. **Mr Bond signposted the Federation of Cambridge Residents Association (FECRA) report in response to the proposal to develop a Local Community Plan that sets out joint priorities for residents, Police, County Council etc. The FECRA report sets out local priorities, and would be published on the Chesterton Residents Association website from 28 January 2011.**

The Committee welcomed the proposal to look at how to better engage partners such as the police as part of the pilot process.

3. **A member of the public asked how decisions could be made in informal groups (such as for Environmental Improvement Projects), how meetings could be kept succinct, how topics could be made of interest to a multi-ward audience when residents could be focussed on their own ward priorities, plus the need for agenda management to avoid duplication or overburdening of topics.**

The Head of Strategy and Partnerships felt that venues and format of Area Committees was important. Public feedback on these was welcomed, particularly if alternative times or venues were desired.

Surgeries were proposed at the meeting start for people to discuss issues with ward councillors in a café style environment. Issues could also be raised in the open forum section of the meeting.

The Committee felt that it was important to have different formats for different parts of the meeting, ie formal and informal decision parts.

The committee made the following comments in response to the report from the Strategy Officer:

- (i) Members sought clarity on how proposed separate planning meetings would work, and if planning items would be taken at the main Planning Committee instead of Area Committees.

- (ii) Members desired more partnership working with other organisations such as the Police, residents Associations etc to make decisions on priorities.

In response to Councillor questions, Councillors, the Director of Customer & Community Services, the Head of Strategy and Partnerships and Neighbourhood Panel Liaison Officer made the following points:

- (i) North Area Committee have developed a process to consider planning and other agenda items in one meeting. This will continue as part of the pilot process for the foreseeable future, but changes can be considered as part of the debate and decision making concerning future action in the pilot period.
- (ii) Recognised the need for targeted community events to attract new people to Area Committees. This may require investigation as to why some groups are not attracted to Area Committees, then developing ways to engage them. This could be achieved through social networking sites, or Councillor/Officer pair off work.

The Committee endorsed the pilot work and requested further details at the March committee.

The Committee decided that the three options highlighted in the Officer's report should be voted on and recorded separately.

The Committee requested changes to two options in the Officer's report as reworded below.

The Committee resolved by 9 votes to 0 votes:

- (i) ~~Agreed to move regulatory decisions (planning applications) to separate sub-meetings. This will require additional meetings to be arranged. The committee resolved to continue with regulatory decisions (planning applications) in their present form, but officers would undertake to review implications and associated issues of alternative arrangements.~~

The Committee by 11 votes to 0 votes to:

- (ii) ~~Agreed the approaches to engagement that it wishes to test in the pilot, that it feels will extend participation, and the timing of meetings to involve interest groups. To note issues in the Officers' report and those raised by~~

members of the public relating to approaches to engagement and agreed to receive further details in March 2011 concerning proposals set out in Appendix 2 of the Officer's report, together with feedback from members of the public.

The following recommendation was deferred:

- (iii) Agreed a name for the pilot that will promote interest.

The meeting ended at 11.20 pm

CHAIR