

WEST / CENTRAL AREA COMMITTEE

28 April 2011
7.30 - 10.55 pm

Council Members Present:

City Councillors for:

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

Co-opted non-voting members:

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

Officers Present

Head of Planning Services – Patsy Dell
Development Control Manager – Sarah Dyer
Safer Communities Manager – Lynda Kilkelly
Chief Surveyor – Philip Doggett
Committee Manager – Martin Whelan

Also Present

Executive Councillor for Climate Change and Growth – Councillor Clare Blair
Chief Executive Cambridgeshire Community Foundation – Jane Darlington

Inspector Steve Kerridge, Cambridgeshire Police
Sergeant Jane Drury, Cambridgeshire Police
Sergeant Mike Barnshaw, Cambridgeshire Police
Clinton Hale, Cambridgeshire Police

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

11/20/WAC Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Zmura.

11/21/WAC Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2011 were approved as a true and accurate record, subject to a minor correction in 11/18/WAC to replace “may” with “are” in the question from County Councillor Brooks-Gordon.

11/22/WAC Matters and Actions arising from the Minutes

11/8/WAC - 20 MPH limit

It was agreed to defer an update until the Safer Neighbourhoods item (11/25/WAC).

11/16/WAC - Friends of Midsummer Common – Shed

The Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation confirmed that the issue had been resolved and that the shed was now in place.

Black Poplar Tree

It was confirmed that officers had confirmed the details regarding the tree to Mr Taylor.

11/17/WAC - Community Safety Issues

Inspector Kerridge advised that based on the Cardiff Model, at present 2 premises were rated “red” and a further 3 premises were rated “amber”. It was stressed that the position was fluid and subject to change at any time.

Inspector Kerridge confirmed that the Police had not requested use of the Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006, and that it had not been used anywhere nationally. It was noted that the legislative position was likely to change in the near future.

11/23/WAC Declarations of Interest

Councillor Rosenstiel declared a personal interest in item 11/29/WAC (Auckland Road) as being of Jewish heritage.

11/24/WAC Open Forum

1) Dick Baxter (Friends of Midsummer Common) - Will the Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation (Cllr Cantrill) confirm that it is Council policy to stop the unlawful driving and parking of motorised vehicles on Midsummer Common, to make the entrance by Victoria Bridge secure, and to prosecute offenders?

a) The Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation acknowledged the issue and explained the changes to the layout of the entrance already implemented, which had the intention of reducing the prevalence of the gates being left open.

The Executive Councillor also explained that dialogue was ongoing with key holders and that they would be reminded of their legal obligations if problems persisted. It was noted that if the problems with the Fort St George persisted the brewery would be involved.

2) Roger Chatterton - Has there been any progress regarding the S106 queries I have raised previously? I was asking about the possibility of more consultation with residents and residents groups re allocation and spending of locally raised S106 monies. Also, greater transparency as to amounts of S106 funds raised by the City overall, and how these funds have been spent. I did suggest that maybe an "S106 account" could be created, showing all credit over the financial year, plus all monies spent from the S106 funds?

Mr Chatterton also sought clarification on specific details regarding the S106 spend in relation to the CRC/Berkley Homes site.

a) The Leader (Cllr Reid) welcomed the question and supported the case for greater transparency. It was noted that it was the aspiration for a significant increase in the number of S106 decisions to be taken by Area Committees.

The Leader (Cllr Reid) explained that it was the intention to publish the S106 account data during 2011/12.

In respect of the Berkley Homes site, the Leader (Cllr Reid) explained that the Head of Planning was currently liaising with residents groups and associations regarding the issue.

11/25/WAC Safer Neighbourhoods

11/8/WAC - 20 MPH Limits

The Committee received an update from Clinton Hale, Manager of the Safety Camera Unit, Cambridgeshire Police regarding the enforcement of the 20 MPH limit in the city centre. It was explained that in absence of countywide police enforcement policy the local police divisional commander has stated that 20mph speed limits will be enforced in the same way as other limits.

Mr Hale explained that 20 MPH limits were normally managed as zones with physical changes to the road layout to “self police” the limit. It was noted that during a recent survey in Maids Causeway 35,000 drivers had been recorded not observing the new 20 MPH speed limit.

The Committee asked Mr Hale the following questions regarding the 20 MPH policy

i. Are the existing signs adequate?

- a) He confirmed that the signs conformed to the legal standards and met the criteria to enable enforcement of the limit. It was noted that at present “Speed Awareness” training was not available for breaching 20 MPH.

ii. Are the current signs prominent enough?

- a) He explained that the size of signs were regulated and needed to be a minimum of 600 mm in diameter at the entry point and smaller ‘repeater’ signs were placed thereafter. Whilst he understood concerns had been raised about their visibility, stated that the positioning and size of signs needed to comply with regulations whilst balancing the need to reduce “street clutter”.

iii. In respect of Warkworth Terrace it was noted that there was a prominent sign indicating the end of the 20 MPH limit and it was questioned whether all the signs should be equally prominent?

- a) The comment was noted.

iv. Clarification was requested on the enforcement policy for the limits?

a) It was confirmed that the 20 MPH limits would be enforced in the same way as other limits.

v. The existing arrangements in Bury St Edmunds were highlighted as good practice, with clearly marked zones indicating the areas covered by the 20 MPH limit.

a) The comment was noted. The Committee were advised that zones required visible engineering such as chicanes or block paving and signs every 100 metres, where as the requirements for a 20 MPH limit did not require traffic calming measures to be in place.

The Head of Road Safety and Parking Services highlighted the difficulty in achieving an appropriate balance between “too few” and “too many” signs. It was noted that an item would be brought to the next meeting to evaluate the existing 20 MPH scheme, which will include signage

A member of the public requested that the Police publish the most recent speed survey undertaken. It was also highlighted that a recent survey carried out by a member of the public had indicated that a significant proportion of the drivers were over 30 MPH, with a bus recorded at 38 MPH. The enforcement policy of the Police was also challenged, and it was questioned whether an increased workload for magistrates was a valid reason for not enforcing.

Public Questions

The Committee received two further questions from Keith Willox (Domus Bursar – Sidney Sussex College) and Barry Robinson (Millers Music).

1. Keith Willox (Domus Bursar – Sidney Sussex College) - Would Councillors support the introduction of an alcohol control zone in the Cumulative Impact Zone to deal with the habitual nuisance and damage that result from large packs of youths drinking outside residential accommodation and shops?

2. Barry Robinson (Millers Music) – The problems associated with Sussex Street were highlighted particularly public urination, used needles and threatening behaviour. Mr Robinson also supported the request for the imposition of a DPPO (Designated Public Places Orders) in the Sussex Street Area.

The Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health acknowledged the concerns. It was explained a DPPO allowed the Police the power to confiscate alcohol within a defined area without an offence being committed. It was further explained that the introduction of a DPPO had been considered by the City Council in 2003 and 2006 and discounted for the following reasons:

- i. The risk of displacing problems from the city centre to neighbouring residential areas. It was explained that areas could not be designated as subject to a DPPO on a precautionary basis. It was also noted that the possibility of introducing a by-law had been explored but that this had not been allowed to proceed by the Department of Communities and Local Government.
- ii. The powers associated with the order could be used without an offence being committed.
- iii. The existence of new powers and approaches which are more appropriate for Cambridge, namely the introduction of the City Centre Neighbourhood Policing Team and use of Section 30 (Anti-social behaviour Act) and Section 27 (Violent Crime Reduction Act) powers.

The changing nature of the problems since 2003 and 2006 from issues with street drinkers, to problems associated with the night time economy was acknowledged. It was also indicated that discussions were ongoing regarding the extension of the CCTV coverage in Sussex Street.

Safer Neighbourhoods Report

Inspector Kerridge introduced Sergeant Barnshaw and Sergeant Drury, and explained the changes to neighbourhood policing in the West/Central Area.

A recommendation made to target the following for prioritisation in the forthcoming period

- Continue efforts to reduce theft of cycles
- Maintain focus on reducing ASB by groups in public

Sgt Barnshaw then introduced the City Centre report. It was explained that the team had been created on 1st April 2011 and contained 8 PC's and 6 PCSO's. An overview of the activity of the new team to date was provided.

- i. **Barry Robinson highlighted the health hazard created by public urination. It was also requested that the Police utilise their powers under section 27 and section 30, as well as giving consideration to the extension of CCTV cover in the area.**
 - a) The Chair advised that dialogue was ongoing regarding improvements to the CCTV coverage in the area.
- ii. **Keith Willox challenged the assertion that there was a lack of evidence to support the introduction of a DPPO.**
 - a) The comment was noted.

It was explained that the DPPO powers had been introduced in 2001 and that more appropriate powers had been introduced since then. It was acknowledged that the problems in Sussex Street were not new, but that consideration should be given to addressing issues associated with public urination.

The changing nature of the alcohol related problems were outlined. It was noted that when the DPPO was last considered the problems were largely related to street drinking, and through the use of other powers had largely been addressed. It was further explained that the problems now largely related to the nighttime economy, and different approaches were required to tackle the issues.

Mr Richard Price spoke on behalf of Park Street Residents Association in support of a DPPO.

Priorities

The committee were advised that separate priorities could be set for two neighbourhood policing areas. Inspector Kerridge also clarified the purpose of the priorities.

During further discussion the following priorities were suggested

- Alcohol Related Anti-Social Behaviour
- Cycle Theft
- Dwelling burglary
- Speeding on Granchester Road and surrounding area
- Speeding in the city centre
- Littering on Jesus Green and other green spaces

Resolved

The committee resolved to recommend the following priorities

- i. Anti-social behaviour in the city centre (Unanimously)
- ii. Cycle theft (Unanimously)
- iii. Dwelling burglary in West (5 votes to 0)
- iv. Speeding in the City Centre/ Granchester Road (6 votes to 0)

11/26/WAC Punting - Anti-social behaviour issues relating to punting touts

The Committee received a report from the Safer Communities Manager regarding punting and anti-social behaviour issues relating to punt touts.

The Chair read out a pre-notified question on behalf of Bev Nicholson, who asked whether the Cam Conservators could acquire the power to regulate punts. The Safer Communities Manager explained that at present the Cam Conservators didn't have the power to regulate numbers, however, indirect controls are available for example, controlling the numbers of punts moored at the licensed pontoons. The existing pontoon licence holders have only been granted short-term licences up to 31 March 2012. The Conservators will discuss the terms and conditions of the existing licences over the coming months.

- i. Specific problems over the Easter Weekend were highlighted. Concerns were raised about obstruction, general nuisance and the effect on the tourist economy.

- ii. It was questioned whether Love Cambridge had any powers which could be used to tackle the issues raised. The Leader (Cllr Reid) confirmed that Love Cambridge had no powers to address the problems, but that it was an extremely useful mechanism to channel complaints from traders.
- iii. The positive improvements regarding the behaviour of punt touts associated with the Quayside were highlighted, but it was acknowledged that this had only been possible because the Council owned the land and could impose contractual obligations on operators. It was noted that the land ownership issues were incredibly complicated and not easy to resolve.
- iv. The ownership of the land surrounding Garret Hostels Bridge was questioned, and it was suggested that the County Council owned the land. The Head of Road Safety and Parking confirmed that the area was a public highway but that the County Council did not own the land.
- v. It was questioned whether the Cam Conservators could use their navigation powers to control the number of punts. The Safer Communities Manager advised that under the current licensing arrangements that this would not be possible, but would be reviewed after 31st March 2012.
- vi. It was questioned whether aggressive punt touts could be moved on or removed. The Chair highlighted the difficulties associated with prosecuting aggressive punt touts.
- vii. Concern was expressed about the displacement of problems to other areas of the city centre in response to the changes at the Quayside. Concerns were also expressed about the risk of a major accident on the river, due to the over-supply of punts on the river. The extent to which the problems had been displaced was challenged.
- viii. The committee were advised that powers did exist in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to create a by-law to regulate punt touting, but that the power had not been enacted.

The Leader (Cllr Reid) concluded the discussion. It was agreed that the Council would continue to lobby the Secretary of State regarding the power to create by-laws and that the city council would follow up:

1. Assessing the degree to which punt touting on King's Parade is detrimental to the visitor/resident experience.
2. Assessing whether the ownership of the land by Garrett Hostel Bridge, which is used for embarkation, can be identified.
3. Talking to the County Council about how they might use any powers of control they have as a highway authority.

These three items are within the remit of the Exec Cllr for CSR and they would probably best be taken forward, if action were feasible, through Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

11/27/WAC Community Development and Leisure Grants

The Committee received a report from the Chief Executive of Cambridgeshire Community Foundation regarding Community Development and Leisure Grant applications.

With regards to the "Friends of Histon Road Cemetery" application it was agreed to support the application, but requested that the Community Foundation reviewed whether it should be a shared application with the North Area Committee in future.

The Chief Executive of the Community Foundation clarified the governance arrangements surrounding the graveyard application.

Resolved: to approve as listed in the committee report the applications from

- i. Castle Community Action Group (Unanimously)
- ii. Windsor Road Residents Association (6 votes to 0)
- iii. Friends of the Ascension Graveyard (7 votes to 0)

11/28/WAC Localism and Planning

The Committee received a presentation from the Head of Planning Services and the Executive Councillor for Climate Change and Growth regarding the Localism Bill.

- i. It was questioned whether the unique nature of Cambridge with a particularly strong public interest in planning issues would make the task very difficult.**
 - a) It was explained that neighbourhood forums could be constituted to address particular local planning issues, and it would be for the community to decide the parameters.
- ii. The importance of clearly defined boundaries was highlighted.**
 - a) The challenges associated with boundaries were acknowledged, but noted that the process was designed to be bottom up and driven by the community.
- iii. The willingness (or not) of the planning authorities to change direction if required was questioned. How the proposals for greater localism could be reconciled with some of the centrist ambitions of other parts of the coalition was questioned?**
 - a) The Executive Councillor explained that neighbourhood plans would be subject to a referendum. It was also explained that the City Council was seeking to develop pilot projects.
- iv. It was questioned whether the proposals would have any effect on the un-democratic role currently undertaken by the Planning Inspectorate with regards to appeals.**
 - a) The Head of Planning Services advised that 85% of all applications were approved; of those that went to appeal the Council was successful in 75% of cases.

11/29/WAC Planning Applications

10a 11/0044/FUL- Auckland Road, Cambridge

The Committee received an application for full planning permission for the erection of a community centre and synagogue (following the demolition of the Yasume Club).

The committee received a representation from the agent (Amy Richardson) who spoke in support of the application.

Resolved (by 5 votes to 2) to approve the application for the following reasons

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

East of England plan 2008: Policies SS1, T1, T9, T14, ENV6, ENV7 and WM6

Cambridge Local Plan (2006): Policies 3/1, 3/4, 3/7, 3/11, 3/12, 4/11, 5/12, 8/2, 8/6, 8/10 and 8/17

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.

10b 11/0172/FUL- Former Brunswick Site, Newmarket Road, Cambridge
The item was withdrawn from the agenda prior to the committee.

10c 11/0055/FUL- 1 And 2 Wellington Court, Cambridge
The Committee received an application for full planning permission for Change of use of 2 three storey office buildings to form 6 x 1bed flats, together with the erection of a bin and bike store and insertion of a rooflight and the provision of replacement hard and soft landscaping.

Resolved (Unanimously) to approve the application for the following reasons

1.This development has been approved subject to conditions and the prior completion of a section 106 planning obligation (/a unilateral undertaking), because subject to those requirements it is considered to conform to the Development Plan as a whole, particularly the following policies:

East of England plan 2008: ENV7
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003: P6/1, P9/8

Cambridge Local Plan (2006): 3/4, 3/7, 3/8, 4/13, 5/1, 5/2, 8/2, 8/6, 10/1

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.

10d 11/0184/FUL- 82 Regent Street, Cambridge

The Committee received an application for full planning permission for use of 82 Regents Street as nail treatment/beauty treatment salon (sui generis) or Class A2 use in the alternative.

Resolved (Unanimously) to approve the application for the following reasons

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

East of England plan 2008: ENV6 and ENV7

Cambridge Local Plan (2006): 3/4, 3/7, 4/11, 4/13, 6/6 and 8/2

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.

11/30/WAC Thank you

The committee thanked Cllrs Dixon and Zmura for their work and wished them well for the future.

The meeting ended at 10.55 pm

CHAIR

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