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West/Central Area Committee (City Councillors representing Castle, Market and Newnham Wards) 13 January 2005 7:30pm – 9.33pm Minutes & Actions

Present: Councillors: John Hipkin (Castle Ward, Chair), Marie-Louise Holland and Simon Kightley (Castle Ward), Mike Dixon, Colin Rosenstiel and Joye Rosenstiel (Market Ward), Rod Cantrill, Sian Reid and Julie Smith (Newnham Ward)

Also Present: County Councillors David White (Castle Ward), Anthony Bowen (Market Ward) and Alexander Reid (Newnham Ward).

Additional information for public: City Council officers can also be emailed firstname.lastname@cambridge.gov.uk
The Committee Manager for West/Central Area Committee is liz.whitcher@cambridge.gov.uk

Members of the City Council have individual email addresses which are listed on the City Council website:
www.cambridge.gov.uk/councillors/members.htm
Members of the County Council can be emailed:
Firstname.lastname@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

05/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

05/02 OPEN FORUM

This was an Open Forum with a special theme – the Stagecoach local Citi Bus Routes. Members of the public and councillors asked

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questions and raised issues – please see the attached Summary Sheet for details of these and the responses given.

05/03 MINUTES AND ACTION SHEETS

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2004 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

05/04 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

05/05 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

05/06 UPDATE ON ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME 2004/05

Councillor C Rosenstiel spoke for recommendation 2.2 and asked that the Area Joint Committee (AJC) and the Highway Authority be asked to sort out the problems with parking on the paving. There was no point in making the environmental improvements if there was no enforcement of the parking regulations.

The Landscape Architect said that all stakeholders would be involved including the County Council as the Highway Authority.

Councillor J Smith expressed concern that the Committee had not been provided with an up-to-date budget so that they could judge the relative costs of recommendation 2.1.

The Landscape Architect reminded members that she had circulated an email in December with the current state of the budget. Currently the Committee's budget is underspent by £25,000.

Councillor Sian Reid proposed and Councillor J Smith seconded the following additional recommendations:

“ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT IN MARKET SQUARE

The basic architecture, urban design and function of Market Square, and its animation with the market, is good. However, it is looking unkempt, uncared for and tired. Improvements to it would be

1. Cleaning and floodlighting of Guildhall. The Guildhall is such a large and dominant building that its presence greatly affects the ambience of Market Square. It would be very beneficial to spruce up the external appearance of the Guildhall by cleaning the

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stonework, and re-painting the metal work in its original colour. It would also be very beneficial to install some discreet floodlighting on the Market Square façade of the building.

Area Committee members are invited to recommend to Commercial and Human Resources Committee that this work be carried out.

2. Attention to the detailed quality of the existing streetscape.

A detailed check is needed on the quality and condition of the existing items of streetscape from the more prominent (eg the fountain and signage) to the less prominent such as streetlamps, litter bins, recycling bins, paving, and kerbs. All these should be brought up to good and cared-for condition.

The Area Committee is invited to recommend:

- ***A detailed investigation of possible works***
- ***The allocation of a significant part of the EIP budget towards these improvements***
- ***The consideration of whether other budgets exist to enhance the EIP budget. “***

Councillor C Rosenstiel said that improvements to the market needed to be dealt with carefully and he thought the two additional recommendations should be linked and neither should stand alone. There were also problems with large lorries using the market.

Councillor J Rosenstiel asked that the public toilets in the Market Square should also be considered in any improvements and whether they should be made available to the public.

A member of the public asked if the dark skies initiative had been taken into account.

Councillor Sian Reid replied to these points – she thought the first part could stand alone, she agreed that the dark skies initiative was important and that the floodlighting could be done selectively in terms of when and how.

Councillor J Smith asked that the costings for the second part of the new recommendation be brought to the next meeting of the committee.

The Landscape Architect assured the Chair that there were the funds to do the improvement audit asked for in the second part of the new recommendation.

The Committee voted on the recommendations in the officer report as follows:

2.1 Agreed (by 8 votes to 0) to the proposal for six litter bins for Burleigh Street at a cost of £3,300.

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2.2 **Agreed** (by 9 votes to 0) to officers investigating the cost of renewing the paving at the East Road end of Burleigh Street.

The Committee voted on the recommendations in Councillor Sian Reid's proposal as follows:

Agreed (by 6 votes to 1) to recommend to the Executive Councillor for Commercial & Human Resources that the external appearance of the Guildhall be spruced up by cleaning the stonework and repainting the metal work in its original colour.

Agreed (by 7 votes to 0) to a detailed investigation of the cost of possible works on the quality and condition of the existing items of streetscape from the more prominent (eg the fountain and signage) to the less prominent such as streetlamps, litter bins, recycling bins, paving, and kerbs.

05/07 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & LEISURE GRANTS 2004-05

In response to questions from members, the Grants Manager explained that the Committee could, if it wished, decide to award Newnham Youth Club a further grant in subsequent years, that the Club was run by youth workers, parents and volunteers and held its meetings in St Mark's Church.

Councillor J Smith asked that a note be included in the letter awarding the grant explaining that the Club should not expect to be given a grant in future years.

A member of the public asked if all the child protection issues had been checked and the Grants Manager assured him that no community group was allowed to go ahead without all the checks in place.

The Chair asked for clarification of what would happen to the underspend this year.

The Grants Manager explained that 3 of the Area Committees were underspent and 1 was overspent. The Executive Councillor for Community Development & Leisure, Joye Rosenstiel had agreed that there would be one more opportunity to give grants at the next area committees in February/March and then any underspend would go back into the pool of funds for city wide distribution.

The committee agreed (by 9 votes to 0) the recommendation in the officer report to award Newnham Youth Club £4,258 and the 38th Cambridge Brownies (Wesley Church) £250.

The meeting closed at 9.33pm.

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Chair

WEST/CENTRAL AREA COMMITTEE – 13 January 2005

Questions And Answers At The Open Forum on Local Bus Services (and other issues)

Andy Campbell (Managing Director, Stagecoach) gave a brief introduction to Stagecoach, Cambridgeshire. He explained that Stagecoach was a commercial bus operator and had to run services accordingly. However, he recognised that some services were socially necessary and he worked with the City and County councils to provide these.

Basil Jackson (Head of Passenger Transport at the County Council) explained that following de-regulation, individual bus operators like Stagecoach decided routes, frequency of services etc. The Transport Authority (in this case the County Council) had considerable discretion to provide services that were socially necessary. The County Council also has a number of strategic objectives such as encouraging more people to use public transport. Deciding which socially necessary services should be subsidised was often difficult. Those to deep rural areas were often perceived to be good candidates but residents there often used the standard service provided. Cambridge city has a standard network provided by Stagecoach. In the county overall, 20% of services are supported by a grant from the county. In July 2004, Stagecoach made the decision to alter the network to attract more customers. When that happened there were citizens who benefited but also those who lost out. The County Council then had to look to provide support where there were gaps in service.

Sybille Thirion (Transport Policy Manager, City Council) explained that there was a Transport Strategy for the County which covered all forms of public transport. The City Council was able to contribute to the Strategy but had no statutory duty. But the City Council had a commitment to subsidise transport that was needed such as the Night Bus, Evening services, the Addenbrooke's Park and Ride shuttle and , the evening Park & Ride services. The City Council hoped that these would eventually become commercially viable. The City Council also ran the Taxi Card Scheme which was a 24-hour service to help those without access to conventional transport and/or those on low incomes. And partly subsidised Dial A Ride.

The Chair asked about the Dial-a-Ride service.

Basil Jackson explained that it is a door-to-door scheme run by volunteers and subsidised by the County and City Councils. Members of the public pay a membership fee to join the scheme and be able to use the service. Criteria for membership include being disabled, over the age of 65, having no access to standard transport provision.

Question	Answer
Resident 1: Resident 1:I and my school age daughter have been regular users of the C7 bus for the past 2 years, boarding the bus at the lower end of Histon Road. I	Andy Campbell acknowledged that there had been a 40% growth in the use of the bus and that that had led to over capacity. In the short term, the 106 had been diverted to relieve the pressure. For the longer term, he was considering 2 options for the C7 and the C1:

<p>travel to Addenbrookes and my daughter to Long Road Sixth Form College.</p> <p>Between the hours of 7.30-9am and 3-5.30pm there is peak use by students going to and from Long Road therefore buses are full to capacity in the morning and by the time they reach the lower end of Histon Road are unable to stop for passengers. If we are then successful in catching a bus there is often delay in Emmanuel Street due to drivers changing shifts, buses not leaving immediately or to congestion of buses. I have experienced numerous journeys taking more than 1 hour 50 minutes in total from start point to finish point to travel the 5 mile distance.</p> <p>Is there any audits done to monitor this and are there any action plans to tackle these issues?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Convert the C1 to a double decker bus 2) Change the frequency of the C7 from 20 minutes to 10 minutes. <p>He said he was also talking with the County Council about the design of the one way system in the city centre to help deal with bus congestion in Emmanuel Street, to be implemented in the Autumn 2005.</p> <p>Basil Jackson confirmed that there were plans to provide bus stops on only one side of Emmanuel Street and to make the street one way. Sometimes driver changeovers did happen in the city centre and the centre was one of a number of time points along the bus route.</p>
<p>County Councillor Bowen expressed concern that if Emmanuel Street were one way that would cause problems for residents of Park Parade. He also commented that there were too many vehicles in the city centre.</p>	<p>Andy Campbell said that the city centre was where the majority of people wanted to go.</p>
<p>Resident 2:</p> <p>The City Centre Shuttle Bus is not always very full and is very erratic. It is supposed to be every 10 minutes but just does not arrive. Would it be possible to have signs like they have in Brighton which let you know when the next three buses will arrive. It would also be helpful to have seats at the bus stop.</p>	<p>Basil Jackson explained that the bus was subsidised by the County Council and was free to users. It was introduced following the closure of some city centre streets. He said it <u>was</u> well used although there might be parts of the day when it was less well patronised. He agreed that there was potential for an even better service. There was pressure to provide an environmentally clean vehicle (currently natural gas) but there was not a large supply of those so there were problems with maintenance as some spare parts had to come from Canada! Diesel buses might have to be used.</p> <p>Andy Campbell said it was a 15 minutes service and he had not heard any complaints about unreliability. Electric buses have also been tried and it was hoped to switch to these in future. He confirmed that these were able to re-charge en route while being driven.</p>

<p>Follow-up point: there are also problems with publicity.</p>	<p>Basil Jackson agreed that publicity issues did need addressed.</p>
<p>Councillor Hipkin: Why is the service free?</p>	<p>Basil Jackson said that it was part of the strategy of reducing traffic congestion in the city centre by encouraging people to use public transport.</p>
<p>County Councillor White: (referring to Resident 1's question) My son has also experienced being unable to get on the bus 50% of the time. Delay is also caused by passengers buying tickets from the driver. Long Road students have season tickets. Why is it not possible to buy a booklet of tickets at newsagents like they do on the continent? Or why not expand the door-to-door services.</p>	<p>Sybille Thirion pointed out that the dial-a-ride services have to be heavily subsidised. Basil Jackson agreed that door-to-door services are not the answer. Both he and Andy Campbell acknowledged that passengers being able to buy tickets in advance was desirable. BJ said that use of Smart cards was being considered and trials were due later in the year on Park & Ride services.</p>
<p>Resident 3: It would be really helpful to be able to use my megarider ticket on the Huntingdon bus as it stops right outside my door.</p>	<p>Andy Campbell explained that he was not allowed by the rules governing the de-regulated bus services to contact other bus companies to work together on such matters. Basil Jackson agreed with the resident and said that the County Council was exploring the possibility of being able to issue county-wide tickets.</p>
<p>County Councillor A Reid: To go back to using diesel buses on the Shuttle service would be a retrograde step; the electric bus is much better and contributes to moving out new technology. There was considerable pollution from buses in the city centre.</p>	<p>Andy Campbell said he hoped to use electric buses.</p>
<p>Councillor Holland: When will the new 10 minute schedule for the C7 bus begin?</p>	<p>Andy Campbell said it depended on when the new vehicles were delivered but probably September/October 05.</p>
<p>Councillor Holland: is it possible to do a pilot dial-a-ride trial for people trying to access Addenbrookes and for Long Road students?</p>	<p>Sybille Thirion explained that the existing Dial-a-Ride services were at capacity. And that the primary purpose of Dial-A-ride was to offer an alternative for those who could not use conventional buses. Andy Campbell assured the meeting that the problems with the C7 were being addressed.</p>
<p>Resident 4: (follow up to Resident 2) No answer to the question about possibility of signs at bus stops to indicate when the next bus would arrive.</p>	<p>Basil Jackson said there would be trials of such a system over the summer. The facility would not be available at every bus stop, only at key ones. However, at every stop there would instructions for how to access the internet via mobile phone text messaging to find out when the next bus was due at that stop.</p>

	Andy Campbell added that there were plans for the buses to be given priority at traffic lights to help them keep to their timetable.
Resident 5: Could the service from the rail station to the historic centre be improved?	Andy Campbell said that the C1, C3 and C7 called at the rail station on both the outward and the return journey and there were also the Cambridge Blue buses which ran a dedicated service to and from the city centre from the rail station (every 15 minutes).
Resident 6: What is the cost per mile of the use of the bus service?	Andy Campbell said it was 30p.
Resident 7: expressed concern about the way drivers drive the bus often throwing passengers about.	Andy Campbell said that all drivers could be identified by the company from the ticket issued. He encouraged members of the public to complain to him about any driver problems and to send the ticket with their complaint. If drivers needed re-training that would be done.
Councillor J Rosenstiel: Would it be possible to include the Shuttle bus route on the map in the leaflet about the Stagecoach services?	Andy Campbell said that could be done – the reason for not doing it had been not to make the map too confusing to read because of the number of routes on it.
Councillor Hipkin: I am very concerned for the safety of cyclists in Bridge Street as the drivers seem to be trying to catch up on their timetable when driving along this narrow street.	Andy Campbell agreed there were safety issues in this street and, following a complaint from a cyclist, all drivers have been instructed to take particular care in Sidney Street. He emphasised again that any complaint would be addressed. Sybille Thirion added that the City Cycling Officer was liaising with Stagecoach in order to improve cyclists and bus drivers' mutual awareness.
The following 2 questions not concerning buses had been sent in advance of the meeting and the Chair read them out along with the officer reply:	
Resident 8: I wonder if you could tell me what progress has been made to replace the ugly 'temporary' lamp-posts on Kings Parade which have been there for so long now I can't remember when they were put up! What continues to amaze me is that whilst time and energy have been entirely lacking in getting rid of this blight on one of the most famous and beautiful streets in Britain. I find it difficult to believe that no suitable form of attractive street lighting can be found by the panel. What do other historic towns do – York, Bath, even Bury St Edmunds? Why not have up-lighters in the pavement	<p>The Chair explained that the County Council was responsible for street lighting. The City Council officer responsible for liaising with the County Council replied as follows: I have spoken to Richard Preston at the County about this.</p> <p>He acknowledges that no progress has been made and action needs to be taken. He is convening a meeting with his lighting colleagues next week to agree a way forward, which is likely to support going out to the commercial market to find a lamp column suitable for King's Parade (the aim had been to get a bespoke design). If something suitable can be found our members will be consulted.</p>

<p>(as in Union Street) and get rid altogether of this row of horrible posts that ruin the sight-line of the Parade. Whatever the nameless panel decides, please will it decide and take action. Surely this is not too much to ask of the local authority whose responsibility this is.</p>	<p>The County then has to identify how to pay for this and hope that implementation can take place about this time next year.</p> <p>The County will also be looking at lighting elsewhere in the city centre, some of which is poor.</p>
<p>Resident 9: I would like to know whether there are any plans to improve the inadequate street lighting and CCTV coverage in All Saints Passage.</p> <p>The passage is extremely poorly lit, especially at the Johns Street end. I walked down there at 5 O' clock on a Saturday afternoon before Christmas and it really was as black as pitch! To make matters worse, a gang of youths were running up and down bragging about what they had just shop lifted from Sainsbury's, which made me feel very nervous. The owner of the Cheese Company (in All Saints Passage) called the police, but his staff told me the shops down there have no end of problems with vandalism, and things like people leaving syringes and broken bottles on their doorsteps because it is so poorly lit, and there is no CCTV coverage.</p> <p>I wrote to the County Council street lighting dept to raise this, and all they said was that the lights that <i>were</i> in the vicinity were working, and they did not have any money to buy anymore, or to install CCTV.</p> <p>I don't think this is good enough for the centre of Cambridge. There are some really lovely shops in the Passage and the council should be doing more to make people feel safe when visiting them.</p>	<p>The Chair said that the previous answer about lighting would cover this question as well. All Saints Passage would be flagged up as an area with poor lighting.</p> <p>As regards the CCTV coverage, the City Council's officer had replied as follows: Currently All Saints Passage is not covered by existing CCTV cameras but subject to the completion of a planning agreement (S106) relating to a proposed development nearby, the Council will receive funds that will enable one additional camera to be installed on St Johns/Trinity Street. The camera is required to meet some specific criteria but we will also take the opportunity to eliminate gaps in our coverage for the general good. Accordingly the new camera will be sited to provide coverage of the twin paths either side of All Saints Gardens up to their point of convergence at the entrance to the passage. Our existing cameras on Bridge Street cover the other end of the passage . This additional camera will be an important addition but will not be able to "see " into the narrow part of the passage.</p>

Note: After the meeting, Councillors C and J Rosenstiel and County Councillor Bowen went home via All Saints Passage.

Colin Rosenstiel wrote:

Joye and I both passed by All Saints' Passage on the way home from the Area Committee tonight and found it a veritable blaze of light! It looks as if the lights that have been out for many months are all working again.

Joye Rosenstiel wrote:

Following on from the Area Committee tonight, I went home via Bridge Street/Sidney Street. The light in All Saints Passage is back on and the area by the shops well lit.

County Councillor Bowen replied:

I too walked the area after the meeting, and feel the lighting could be improved in its height, aim and quality; its distribution is good. I have written so to Richard Preston in some detail, drawing attention to the poor lighting in St John's Street and inviting his comments, and to the complainant.