



North Area Committee
**(Comprising of City Councillors representing Arbury, King's Hedges,
 East Chesterton and West Chesterton Wards)**

10 February 2005: 7.30pm – 9:25pm

Minutes & Actions

Councillors Present:

Arbury: Anthony Hymans, Rhodri James and Tim Ward (Chair).
 King's Hedges: Louise Downham and Elizabeth Hughes
 West Chesterton: Dianne Armstrong, Max Boyce and Ian Nimmo-Smith.
 East Chesterton: Donald Adey and Jenny Bailey

County Councillor Present: Julian Huppert (East Chesterton)

Additional information for public:

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| | | Action by |
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| 05/01 | APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE | |
| | City Cllrs Liddle and Bell County Cllrs Jones and Leeke | |
| 05/02 | MINUTES | |
| | The minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2004 were confirmed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair. <u>Matters arising from previous minutes</u> Arbury Garages The Committee Manager advised that he had received advice from the Director of Community Services that there were three options for the garages which included: | <i>Committee Manager / Area</i> |

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| | <p>1. Demolition of 17 garages and clearance of the site - £14k.</p> <p>2. Complete rebuild of 17 garages; new brick walls (slightly stronger than concrete sectional walls but gives slightly smaller internal space), insulated roofs, new doors and drainage - £78K.</p> <p>3. Complete rebuild of 17 garages; new concrete sectional walls (modern version), insulated roofs, new doors and drainage, etc - £68.5K.</p> <p>The Committee Manager said that the prices were estimates for City Services to carry out the work and that finalised prices would be available by the next meeting in April.</p> <p>Progress of Hurrell Road The Chair advised that he had no new information and the scheme will not be going ahead. He said that he would continue to monitor the situation and report back if anything changed.</p> <p>East Chesterton Shops County Cllr Huppert advised that he had been informed that the disabled parking bay and drop-kerb outside Chesterton High Street shops would be introduced within two weeks.</p> <p>Bye-law for grass verges Cllr Bailey advised that a pilot scheme for each ward had been devised and would be presented to the Environment Scrutiny Committee for consideration. She said that the pilot scheme (if approved) would run for one year after which residents would be able to comment on its success and then it would be expanded to the rest of the City.</p> <p>St Kilda Avenue – verge tarmac The Committee Manager advised that a representative from the Highways Authority had viewed the grass verge but was unable to do anything about it at this stage due to budgetary constraints. The Committee Manager commented that he had spoken to the Council’s parking enforcement officer who will monitor and act upon cars that are illegally park on or next to the verge.</p> | <p><i>Champion</i></p> <p><i>None</i></p> <p><i>None</i></p> <p><i>None</i></p> <p><i>None</i></p> |
| 05/03 | DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST | |
| | None. | |
| 05/04 | OPEN FORUM | |
| | <p>Resident 1 asked if the City Council had a consultation policy and if so, what were its basic provisions. Resident 1 commented that as a secretary of a residents association there had been a lack of consultation in regard to the Council’s Mooring, Cycleway and Planning policies.</p> <p>Cllr Nimmo-Smith advised that he was unaware of a specific document that outlined the Council’s consultation policy. He said that the Council followed principles of consultation which included timeliness and meeting with residents associations. Cllr Nimmo-</p> | <p><i>Cllr Nimmo- Smith</i></p> |

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| | <p>Smith said that he would make further inquiries on this issue and get back to resident 1.</p> <p>Resident 2 asked (question 1) if there was going to be a reduction in the funding for the taxi card and dial-a-ride schemes. Resident 2 also asked (question 2) what the committee thought of the bad publicity for Kings Hedges Ward in regard to recent drug raids by police.</p> <p>Cllr Bailey advised that the taxi-card and dial-a-ride schemes were currently under review but there were no plans at this stage to reduce funding levels. She said that the schemes cost the Council considerable expense each year and the review would look at whether the Council was getting value for money. Cllr Nimmo-Smith said that the Council had to ensure that the schemes were meeting peoples needs and that the review would be able to identify this. Cllr Huppert advised that the dial-a-ride scheme was also funded by the County Council and any changes to it would have social service implications.</p> <p>In regard to question 2 Cllr Nimmo-Smith commented that the Police Service would often contact newspapers on the day of a raid in order to publicise the arrests and send a message to other potential criminals. The Chair commented that this sort of publicity was used by police in order to fend off criticism that they were not doing enough to reduce crime.</p> <p>Resident 3 asked why the footpaths outside Chesterton High Street shops had not been fixed.</p> <p>Cllr Bailey advised that this matter was dependent on section 106 money becoming available from the developer. She said that it was unfortunate that this was taking so long but until the contracts were signed there was no money to fix the footpaths.</p> | <p>None</p> <p>None</p> |
| 05/05 | STAGECOACH | |
| | <p>Paula Heaney of the East Chesterton Bus Users Group (ECBUG) addressed the meeting. She advised that ECBUG was a non-political group that comprised of local residents and councillors with a view to improving bus services for Chesterton residents. Ms Heaney said that ECBUG was formed as residents were unhappy with some recent decisions by Stagecoach which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Withdrawal of Citi 4 and 5 services in July 2004. • Rerouting of Citi 2 including a turning loop out of Cambridge along Union Lane. • Withdrawal of bus service from Fen Estate and introduction of a much reduced, subsidised service. • Poor communication from County Councillors on changes following Stagecoach's plans and registration of routes. <p>Ms Heaney advised that ECBUG had met regularly to review the impact of the changes in Chesterton and can report the following:</p> | <p>None</p> |

1. CITI 2

- Regularly unreliable. Long gaps followed by bunching.
- Inappropriate timing points. Buses waiting at bus stops for long periods with engines running e.g. Union Lane.
- Detrimental impact of buses operating on Union Lane. The service benefits no-one in Union Lane as the Lane is used as a turning point for buses.

2. CITI 8

- Inappropriate bus types for residents.
- Inappropriate routing - avoids shops, doctors' surgery and other facilities on Chesterton Road.
- Hourly service only - does not run at peak times nor on Saturdays.
- (However) Service had become more reliable of late.

3. Bus Watch

Ms Heaney advised that ECBUG has conducted two bus watches. The first was a full day observation in October 2004 and found:

- Service not reliable – 10 minute service with regular gaps and bunching.
- Some services did not occur.
- Out of Service buses using Union Lane - compounding environmental problems.

Ms Heaney said that a second bus watch was conducted from Wednesday 26th to Friday 28th January 2005 (3.00-7.00 pm on all three days). She said that the findings were similar to those from the October watch which were summarised below for the Citi 2.

| | Total Buses | Gap 15 mins or more | % | Gap 5 mins or less | % | On Time | % |
|---------------|-------------|---------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Wed | 25 | 8 | 32% | 10 | 40% | 7 | 28% |
| Thurs | 24 | 7 | 29% | 10 | 42% | 7 | 29% |
| Fri | 20 | 5 | 25% | 9 | 45% | 6 | 30% |
| TOTALS | 69 | 20 | 29% | 29 | 42% | 20 | 29% |

Ms Heaney said that on Wednesday the longest gap was 27 minutes and on Thursday there were more than 26 minutes between three services. On Friday the longest gap was 44 minutes between services. She said that there were considerable bunching and convoys of two or more buses on all three days.

Ms Heaney said that in regard to the Citi 8 she was pleased to advise that there were no key reliability issues and that improvements have taken place. She said that the main problems now were the types and timings of the service and possible removal of the service altogether.

Andy Campbell (Managing Director - Stagecoach) addressed the meeting. Mr Campbell commented that he would look carefully at the information provided and try to address the concerns but could

not provide detailed answers at this stage. He said that while the service could always improve residents needed to understand the difficulties of running a bus service in an historical town such as Cambridge. Mr Campbell said that Cambridge roads were in limited supply, narrow and often congested. Mr Campbell commented that when problems occurred on the A14 and A11 the knock-on effect was that Cambridge City became grid-locked and buses could not operate efficiently. He said that the problems with the Cambridge transport system were so rare that he only knew of one other major city (i.e. Bristol) that has similar problems.

Mr Campbell said that in regard to the No 8 bus and the Fen Estate, this route could not be run commercially as it lost £3000 every four weeks. He said that the route is currently being subsidised due to social needs but its long term future was dependent on County Council funding.

Basil Jackson (Officer - County Council) addressed the meeting and advised that the County Council was committed to a more sustainable bus service. He said that while the County Council had to deal with competing priorities and budgetary pressures its aim was to provide a service that met the vast majority of peoples needs. Mr Jackson said that future meetings would be required to discuss individual routes.

Councillor and Public Questions to Stagecoach

Anne Campbell MP asked why Stagecoach was reluctant to provide detailed information about how they could make services more accessible to residents. She said that more information was required on how Stagecoach was going to improve the Citi 2 service.

County Cllr Huppert commended ECBUG for the work they had done on bus services. He said the County Council Executive was intending to reduce expenditure on Transport which was unfortunate for the people of Chesterton. He asked Stagecoach if they could keep ECBUG informed as the issues progressed.

Cllr Nimmo-Smith advised that he had received a letter from a resident on St Andrews road who complained that his early morning bus was consistently eight minutes early. Cllr Nimmo-Smith asked if anything could be done about this.

Cllr Downham said that she had received a complaint from a resident who was recently ordered off a bus by the driver as she could not stop her baby from crying. She asked if anything could be done to prevent this from happening in the future.

Cllr Bailey commented that she approved of long recovery times but the issue was where they could be done so as not to disrupt residents.

Residents raised the following issues / questions:

- Why were Stagecoach fares comparatively high.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were wheelchairs and pushchairs permitted in the gangway. <p>Mr Campbell advised that he could not provide detailed information or make any promises to residents at this stage due to budget uncertainties. He said that there had been a 45% growth in bus services in the City over the last three years which was the highest of any city outside London. In regard to the comparatively high cost of fares Mr Campbell said that costs had increased due to drivers pay, high cost of fuel and insurance. He added that due to the City's transport design problems drivers needed more recovery time which also increased costs. He added that multi journey tickets offered very good value to regular travellers.</p> <p>Mr Campbell said that he did not mind sharing information in a public forum but was reluctant to pass it on individually to councillors and public due to misunderstandings/misrepresentations which often lead to incorrect media reporting and unnecessary panic. He said that in regard to buses running early this was a disciplinary offence and if Cllr Nimmo-Smith could pass on the letter he would investigate the matter.</p> <p>In regard to the issue raised by Cllr Downham Mr Campbell said that he would be happy to refund the fare and to investigate the matter further if more information could be provided. Mr Campbell said that in regard to wheelchairs and pushchairs the policy was that they should not obstruct the gangway. However, drivers were only instructed to advise passengers of this rule and not to get into a confrontation if passengers refused to comply.</p> | |
| 05/06 | UPDATE ON ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME 2004/05 | |
| | <p>The Landscape Architect introduced the report. Following discussion and an amendment to recommendation 2.3 of the officer's report, the committee resolved (by 8 votes 0) to adopt the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To approve extra expenditure on Oak Tree Avenue estimated at £3300. To approve the construction of four parking bays outside 38-56 Oak Tree Avenue estimated at £8000. To approve the principle of lighting the Maple Close car park and agree £4000 towards the cost of lighting the car park. To approve the work to the Campkin Road piazza, estimated cost £2800. | <p><i>Helen Hepburn – Landscape Architect</i></p> |

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| 05/07 | COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND LEISURE GRANTS 2004-5 | | | |
| | The Grants Manager introduced the report and the committee resolved to agree the following grants: | | | <i>Chris Freeman – Grants Manager</i> |
| Community Development | | | | |
| | Group | Project | Bid £ | Offer £ |
| 21 | St George's Church Hall | Vacuum cleaner and crockery | 400 | 400 |
| 22 | Royal British Legion (Arbury/Manor branch) | Outing | 735 | 602 |
| Total | | | 1135 | 1002 |

05/08 APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

A 107 Darwin Drive 04/1236/FUL
 PSR – Cllr James (did not vote or participate in committee deliberation)
DECISION: APPROVED (vote 6-0 unanimous) as set out in the officer's report.

B 160 Kings Hedges Road - 04/1363/FUL
 PSR - Lorraine Webb (resident)
DECISION : APPROVED (vote 6-0 - unanimous) subject to completion of planning obligation and section 106 agreement by 17 February 2005 as set out on the officer's report. In the event that the planning obligation required in connection with this planning application not being completed by 17 February 2005, the planning application be reviewed and following consultation with the Head of Development Services and Chair and Spokes of the Planning Committee, be refused permission for the reasons set out in the officer's report.

05/09 NEXT MEETING

7 April 2005 @ Manor Community College, Arbury Road, Cambridge CB4 2JF

The meeting closed at 9:25pm

CHAIR