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West/Central Area Committee (City Councillors representing Castle, Market and Newnham Wards) 9 February 2006 7:30pm – 9.45pm Minutes & Actions

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

Also Present: County Councillors Alex Reid (Newnham Ward) and Gaynor Griffiths (Market Ward) and David White (Castle Ward)

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06/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from the Chair, Councillor John Hipkin. The Vice Chair Councillor Cantrill was in the Chair.

06/02 OPEN FORUM

The theme of the Open Forum was Open Spaces particularly facilities for young people, community safety and problems with litter.

Dave Coventry, Head of Streetscene gave a short presentation

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about the work various staff of his section did to deal with the litter on the city's open spaces.

In response to a question from a member of the public about whether the City Rangers had a key role in relating to Residents Associations, Mr Coventry said that they helped to address problems at source.

Liz Bisset, Director of Community Services explained what the Council was doing in relation to community safety. She explained that the Council worked in partnership with other agencies such as the police and that 4 priorities had been identified:

1. Dealing with alcohol-related violent crime
2. Anti-Social behaviour – including preventive work
3. Domestic violence
4. Persistent offenders ie those who commit the most criminal offences. Tackling those had already led to a 10% reduction in crime in the city.

Other officers were present to answer questions – Debbie Kaye, Active Communities Manager, Chris Robertson, Parks & Recreation, Lynda Kilkelly, Strategy Officer for Community Safety.

The Chair invited members of the public and councillors to ask questions.

Several residents then asked questions and made statements that related to the recent decision of the Cambridge Traffic Management Area Joint Committee (AJC) to locate the parking of long stay coaches on Parkside which adjoins Parker's Piece.

Resident 1: Locating coaches there was incompatible with the use of Open Space and would spoil a key area of the city. It would be a 24/7 use and was close to schools which caused concerns about safety.

Councillor S Reid, a member of the AJC, summarised the reasons that led to the decision which had been a very difficult one. This move was linked to the next stage in a core scheme for the traffic management in the city centre namely making Emmanuel Street one-way. There were 3 main reasons for this latter decision:

1. To increase the numbers of citizens outside the city centre using public transport and to reduce the delays in the bus schedules caused by problems in Emmanuel Street.
2. Emmanuel Street is the most polluted street in Cambridge.
3. Cyclists have great difficulty negotiating Emmanuel Street with all the bus and car traffic.

The plan is to reduce the number of stops there and those with lowest priority are the long-distance coaches.

The AJC considered 7 sites in total using a number of criteria (including passenger convenience and proximity to Drummer Street) and eventually settled on 2 main options – Victoria Avenue and Parkside – and then decided on the latter.

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The AJC also agreed a number of measures to mitigate the effects of the long-distance coaches parking on Parkside:

The amount of time any one coach may park there is to be reduced and the parking times monitored regularly.

The intention is to move this parking facility to the station area eventually. So this is seen as a temporary solution.

Councillor S Reid emphasised the powers the coach companies have to pick up and drop off passengers where they wish and that the Highway Authority could only try to influence them.

Following that explanation, 2 members of the public asked the following:

- Was there real confidence that the coaches would move to the Station Area in the longer term?
- Was the kiosk on Parkside also going to be only temporary?

Councillor S Reid said that the kiosk had only been given a temporary planning permission. The County Council was the Highways Authority which ultimately determined where the coaches would park. The City Council as the Planning Authority had drawn up the development framework for the Station Area which included provision of 12 bus stops.

A fourth resident was assured that there would be no incursion into the ground of Parker's Piece with the proposed coach parking. He then referred to the use of the Station Area as a bus interchange and stated that this seemed to refer to the 6 stops on each side of the road. This was not in his view a bus station as there was no associated infrastructure such as a free and environmentally friendly bus service to the city centre and the Park and Ride sites.

Councillor C Rosenstiel said that bus interchange was to happen at the Trumpington Park and Ride site.

Two other residents then asked questions that referred to a related possible planning application for the development of the site occupied by the Fire Station:

- The consultation leaflet referred to the provision of 100 dwellings and 75 parking spaces which would all be accessed from Parkside which led to concerns about the impact on both safety and bus timetables at rush hours in particular.
- Would councillors please note the concerns being registered by residents.

Councillors explained to the public that the leaflet was only consultation and had not yet reached the stage of a planning application. Any possible plans for the Fire Station site were quite separate from the coach parking on Parkside. Residents were encouraged to make representations as requested in the consultation leaflet.

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An eighth resident asked about the problems of rubbish bins on Midsummer Common because of the need to protect these from the cattle and so they were too small for the purpose. Also, as there were now no cattle on the Common could the cattle grids be removed?

Councillor J Rosenstiel said she would ask the officers to look into this and explained that the mooring fee was intended to cover litter bin provision.

The Chairman of the Jesus Green Residents' Association welcomed the consultation being carried out by Debbie Kaye, Active Communities Manager and said they would welcome discussion on lighting on Jesus Green and on the plans for the bowling green.

06/03 CAMBRIDGE INDEPENDENT ADVICE CENTRE

Tony Schofield, Deputy Co-Ordinator of the Centre, thanked the Committee for contributing to the funds for producing the leaflets that went to every household in the city about the In-Work Benefits Campaign.

06/04 PROPOSALS FOR THE ENGAGEMENT OF THE CITY COUNCIL WITH THE NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING TEAMS INITIATIVE

John Fuller from Cambridgeshire Police gave a presentation about this new initiative. The whole Cambridgeshire police division is divided into 11 neighbourhoods with 4 for Cambridge city which match the 4 City Council Area Committees. Tackling crime needs to be linked to more partnership working and to more intelligence information being gathered from the community. The benefits of the initiative include the police being more accountable to the local community which Central Government is requiring of them, reduction in crime and in the fear of crime.

The police Intelligence unit would receive information about crime from their partners and from the community (councillors, Residents and Tenants' Associations, businesses, Neighbourhood Watch, schools, members of the public). This would be analysed and then reported to Area Committee Meetings where councillors and members of the public would endorse the analysis which would then be considered by a Neighbourhood Action Group which would prioritise problems and actions. There would be a cycle of information about problems and the actions to address them coming regularly to Area Committee Meetings.

Liz Bisset, the City Council Director of Community Services asked the councillors and members of the public present to give their views on 3 aspects of the scheme:

1. Would the Area Committee be a place to have a regular slot on the agenda for policing issues

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2. Did the Area Committee support the idea of being a forum for identifying priorities from information about crime that had been gathered
3. Was it a good idea to have a pilot in the North Area and then to extend that to all areas in the New Year of 2007.

Councillors Dixon and C Rosenstiel welcomed the initiative. Councillor Dixon thought that the idea of a pilot would show whether the second aspect of the scheme would work in practice. Councillor C Rosenstiel was concerned about the West/Central area which included the city centre which would have its own crime profile and he wondered how the business interests would be engaged.

The Chair added that it was important to include the students of both universities in the initiative.

06/05 MINUTES AND ACTION SHEETS

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2005 were signed as a correct record:

06/06 MATTERS ARISING

Re: Minute Number 05/49: Residents of the Windsor Road area who were present at the meeting asked for an update on the plans for the Windsor Road Environmental Improvements.

In the absence of the officer the Chair explained that a report on Environmental Improvements did not come to every meeting of the area committee.

He undertook to find out what stage the plans were at and to let the residents know. He also said that a report would be coming to the 6 April meeting of the Committee.

06/07 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

06/08 DATES OF MEETINGS

The Committee agreed the following dates for the Municipal Year 2006/07:

8 June 2006
3 August
28 September
23 November
18 January 2007

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15 March

10 May

06/09 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & LEISURE GRANTS 2005-06

The Committee noted that, if the recommendations that evening were agreed, there remained £2,757 unspent in the current year's budget.

Resolved that these funds be returned to the central funds of the Executive Councillor for Community Development & Leisure for spending on any applications for central funding that came in before the end of the financial year on 31 March 2006.

Resolved to award a grant of £3,138 to Newnham Youth Club for running costs.

06/10 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

1 APPLICATION NO: 05/1167/FUL

SITE: Land adjacent 3 Stukeley Close (Newnham)

PROPOSAL: Erection of 1 no 4 bed detached dwelling house

APPLICANT: Mr & Mrs Barton c/o Allen Smith Associates, The Maltings Barn, 27 Kneesworth Street, Royston, Herts SG8 5AB

The Chair explained that Mrs Driscoll, who was to have spoken on behalf of herself and other local residents, had not registered by the deadline due to misunderstanding the letter sent to all objectors. The letters of objection from her and her husband were circulated to the Committee as they had been in the file and so in the public domain.

Resolved (by 6 votes to 2) to refuse the application against officer recommendation. Precise wording of reason for refusal was delegated to officers to draw up in consultation with the Chair. The wording of the refusal was agreed with the Chair as follows:

The design, form and extent of the proposed building would be overly large for the site and out of keeping and scale with the character of the immediate locality. In failing to respect the character, opportunities and constraints of the specific site and its surroundings, the proposal would be contrary to Policies BE1, BE2 and BE4 of the Cambridge Local Plan (1996) and advice on design in Planning Policy Statement 1 (2005).

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APPLICATION NO: 05/1271/FUL

SITE: Granta Public House, 14 Newnham Terrace
(Newnham)

PROPOSAL: Installation of 7 metre flag pole with hidden antenna together with a ground based equipment cabinet.

APPLICANT: Vodafone Ltd. Vodafone House, The Connection, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 2FN

PUBLIC SPEAKERS: Mr Owers on behalf of himself and other local residents

Resolved (On the casting vote of the Chair (vote tied 4 to 4)) to refuse the application against officer recommendation. Precise wording of reason for refusal was delegated to officers to draw up in consultation with the Chair. The wording of the refusal was agreed with the Chair as follows:

The siting, design and appearance of the proposed mast would be unduly prominent and obtrusive in the immediate streetscene and when viewed from nearby attractive and well used open space. It would disrupt the roofscape of the existing building and detract from the character of the conservation area. As such, the proposal would be contrary to the criteria set out in Policy US3 of the Cambridge Local Plan (1996), contrary to Policies BE2, BE4 and BE 32 of the same Local Plan, contrary to the requirement for a sensitive design approach to new telecommunications equipment in PPG 8:Telecommunications, and contrary to the need for new development to preserve or enhance the character of a conservation area.

The meeting ended at 9.45pm.

Chair