

Present:

City Councillors for:

Arbury: Mike Todd-Jones, Tim Ward

King's Hedges: Michael Pitt, Neil McGovern

East Chesterton: Clare Blair, Marian Holness

West Chesterton: Diane Armstrong, Max Boyce, Ian Nimmo-Smith

County Councillors:

Julian Huppert (East Chesterton), Rupert Moss-Eccardt (Arbury), Kevin Wilkins (West Chesterton).

08/51 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from City Cllrs Liddle, Levy and Upstone and County Cllrs Hughes.

The Chair, on behalf of the committee, wished County Councillor Hughes a speedy recovery from her current indisposition.

08/52 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following personal interests were declared:

Agenda Item 3: Cllr Blair attends East Chesterton RA meetings but is not present when planning matters are discussed.

Agenda Item 3: Cllr Holness attends Old Chesterton RA meeting but is not a member.

Agenda Item 7 Q : Cllr Pitt as a governor of a school that has a Children's Centre attached.

08/53 THOSE PRESENT FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

Cllrs: Armstrong, Blair, Boyce, Holness, McGovern, Nimmo-Smith, Pitt and Ward,

08/54 APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

These minutes and the appendix should be read in conjunction with the reports on applications to the committee, where the conditions to the approved applications or reasons for refusal are set out in full and with the Amendment

Sheet issued at the meeting. Any amendments to the recommendations are shown.

Full details of the decisions, conditions of permissions and reasons for refusal may be inspected in the Environment and Planning Department, including those which the committee delegated to the Head of Development Control to draw up.

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|------------------------|--|
| 1 | 08/1181/FUL |
| Site | Land Adj to 7 Church Street Cambridge |
| Proposal | Erection of 3 two-bed flats and 1 three-bed duplex with parking. |
| Applicant | The Executors Of The Late Miss M S Rickard C/O H W Dean LLP 7 Trust Court Chivers Way Histon Cambridge CB24 9PW |
| Recommendation | APPROVE subject to the satisfactory completion of the S106 agreement by 15 January 2009 and subject to conditions |
| Public Speakers | Michael Bond |
| Decision | Approved 6 votes to 2 subject to additional conditions relating to boundary treatment, cycle parking and retention of the existing front boundary wall. |

08/55 SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS

Sergeant Wragg introduced the report. He outlined staffing changes within the team, which had a high turn over of PCSO's due to them moving on to become Police officers.

City-wide approaches to cycle crime has achieved some success and recovery rates for stolen bike have improved. Cyclists riding without lights have also been targeted and the approach of fining such offenders and the offering them the chance to have lights fitted to their bike at no cost.

A recent drug operation, 'Formidable', has resulted in 20 arrests for Class A drug offences.

Undercover work related to vehicle crime has resulted in a number of arrests. However, resulting court action has been disappointing.

Halloween was well managed and a high police presence on the streets resulted in very few problems.

Attacks on foreign students were also down on last year.

He then gave an overview of the current situation in the north of the city as detailed in the report. Multi-agency working with housing agencies and youth workers has achieved results with problem households.

Recent arrests of 5 youths of 14 and 15 years old are seen as a success and court action will follow.

Recommendations were then discussed and the following questions asked:

Q 1. Is there a reason for the amount of violent crime occurring in Haviland Way and does this need to be a priority?

A. This problem has arisen due to the activities of a small group of youths who are attached to one house in the area, multi agency action has been taken and the situation is improving. It is not thought to be in need of priority status.

Q 2. Why does violent crime need to be a priority across the city?

A. There are a number of reasons behind the figures showing increased incidents. Inter-estate groups is an emerging problem and needs to be addressed with a citywide approach. Ring-leaders have been identified and court action is pending. Removal of these individuals should ease the problem.

Q 3. Can speeding in Northfield Area be addressed?

A. Action has been taken in nearby streets and this can be extended to include Northfield Ave.

Q 4. Residents expressed their thanks for the work that has been done to tackle ASB in the Arbury court area. However, will the problems return if priority status is removed?

A. Due to the proximity to City Homes North offices and Arbury Court's status as a community hub, an on-going presence will prevent this.

Q 5. Why did no prosecution following the discovery of Cannabis in the area and why had no officer responded to e-mails and letters on the incident?

A. The discovery of 2 small plants in the area resulted in a Police Caution as the offence did not meet the Crown Prosecution charging standards. This incident had been wrongly reported in the local paper that subsequently apologised for the error.

Q 6. East Chesterton crime figures peaked in August and has been improving since then. Can this improvement be sustained?

A. Individuals and groups causing problems have been identified and one individual is expected to get a custodial sentence in the near future. This should result in sustained improvements. 5 juvenile offenders have also been dealt with. Burglaries continue to be a city-wide problem and dark evenings and the holiday period add to the problem.

Cllr Blair has accompanied PC Lewis on patrol in the area and plans to repeat this on a Saturday evening. Staff at Echo House asked that their thanks be passed on the work done in the area and the improvements they have seen.

Q 7. Has a decision been made on the use of Tasers in the Cambridge area and has the impact on community / police relations been considered.

A. Cllr Pitt and County Cllr Wilkins both agreed that they did not like the idea of Taser use.

Action: Count Cllr Wilkins to investigate County Council's approach to Taser use.

Discussions followed on communication issues as beat officers are not always aware that a problem had been reported when they are off-duty. Improving communication is an on-going issue.

The lack of any City council members or officers at a recent Arbury Policing meeting was acknowledged.

Members asked for clarity on the final recommended priority. Members wanted to be sure that this meant that dwelling burglary was a priority in the North in addition to a citywide priority. The officer assured them that it did.

The following recommendations were agreed by a vote of 8 to 0.

- The prevention of thefts from vehicles in East Chesterton
- To continue tackling anti-social behaviour in the East Chesterton ward, and specific hotspots within the ward
- Tackling dwelling burglary remains a key city wide priority for the Community Safety Partnership, partnership work on this issue should focus on the North for the next period.

08/56 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2008 were confirmed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

08/48 Q6 should read: The City Council in common with other authorities similarly affected, was supporting the Local Government Association action to secure the investments.

08/46 Q3 corrections to spelling for Gary Drive to Garry Drive.

08/46 Q3iii should state that trailer has a dangerously balanced lorry rear on it.

08/57 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

Cllr Nimmo-Smith had supplied written responses to matters arising at the last meeting and text is included here.

- **08/28 Pye Recreations Ground**

The enhancement of the informal path was still under investigation by Active Communities with a possibility of funding it through S106 monies.

- **08/31 Changes to No 4 bus stop**

The Council's Senior Transport Planner has written me as follows: "It was demolished by a bus and it will be replaced once the insurance has been sorted out and Adshel have built a replacement. It is an awkward stop because the shelter cannot be moved further back because of the cinema. I'll try to let you know when I have a date for the replacement."

Action: Cllr Nimmo-Smith will keep committee updated on this.

- **08/48 Q1 Closure of Public Toilets at Arbury Court**

The Council's Street Services Project Development Officer has written as follows:

“The replacement toilets for Arbury Court are being progressed. The invitation to tender is out with a closure date for the end of this month (October). The aim of the project is to provide toilet cubicles, including a DDA compliant facility and parent room, (similar to Park Street, Gonville Place, etc) that face Arbury Road, thereby providing the greatest natural surveillance and will also be visible by the CCTV camera on Arbury Road. By taking this approach it is hoped it will maximise a feeling of confidence and safety for users, whilst ensuring that the toilet cubicles are not directly seen by the residents in Arbury Court.

Subject to the tender price, it is proposed to use the current building. As the footprint of the new toilets will be smaller, the additional space created will be used as a local depot for Streetscene. This secure storage facility will help meet the Council’s aim to tackle carbon dioxide emissions by reducing vehicle travel miles. I can only apologise for the delay but once we have tenders back, we will be able to confirm the final details and quickly provide new toilet facilities at this location.”

Councillor McGovern has enquired further about progress with the tendering process and will report back at a later date.

Action: Cllr McGovern

- **08/48 Q2ii Trees on Milton Road**

Cllr Pitt arranged for Diana Oviatt-Ham, a City Council Arboricultural Officer to attend the committee to answer a number of tree related questions. She gave an update on tree issues. The planned tree planting for Milton Road will give height and character to the area. When established, they will provide marker points along the road. Varieties such as Fake Arcacia and Cherry had proved popular choices with residents. Trees of varying height but producing similar coloured blossoms have also been selected. Planting in the Northern end of the road has been completed and the remainder, which will be more costly due to the harder ground, will be carried out in the autumn of next year. The existing trees will be left in place until this time with the exception of one tree that is diseased and unsafe.

- **08/48 Q2iii Bus stops on Milton Road**

Questions had been raised about the ability of the guided buses to use the existing bus stops in Milton Road (city centre stops have been modified to allow the buses to use them). County Cllr Moss Eccardt has attempted to get a clear answer to this question. However, the information available is contradictory. Consultation has also begun on the proposed changes to city centre bus stops. However, this is in spite of the view of the Area Traffic Committee that the plan is unworkable.

- **08/48 Q3i Tree Planting**

The remedial work requested will be carried out in the very near future.

- **08/48 Q3iii Verge Parking**

Cllr Upstone was not present to feed back on this issue and will be requested to supply a written answer.

- **08/48 Q5 Jesus Green Lottery Funding**

To date it has not been possible to add the entire proposal to the web. The individual who made the request to see the paperwork has been enabled to do so.

- **08/48 Q6 City Rangers – Extension of Authority**

(1) *Stopping errant cyclists*: City Rangers routinely attempt to stop cyclist who are using pathways and roads incorrectly, and log these interventions. In doing so they act as responsible, assertive citizens. (I know Councillors and others who also regularly advise cyclists of traffic offences e.g. cycling the wrong way down a one-way street.) Although they do not have enforcement powers they do inform everyone they stop about where they can and cannot cycle. It is unfortunate that relevant road signs are few and far between. The Rangers' presence in the city centre is widely recognised as a reliable source of information in tackling antisocial cycling and pointing out the penalties such cyclists are likely to face if stopped by a police officer; this they have found to be a good deterrent. Due to the sheer volume of cyclist within the City Centre, this is an ongoing duty which contributes to the safety of pedestrians, wheelchair users, the elderly, etc. This role is integral to the Rangers' remit of helping to keep Cambridge safe and is of particular importance in the City Centre pedestrian areas, hence the number of approaches made by the City Centre Rangers.

(2) *Cycling without lights*: The role of the Rangers in this initiative was solely to offer to fix lights to the bicycles of people who had been stopped by the police and given an on-the-spot fine for cycling without lights. The sets of lights were worth £22 but had been bought at a discounted price of £10. At no stage did the Rangers do any of the stopping.

(3) *No additional powers*: The Rangers have not received and do not seek any powers of the type that have been delegated to PCSOs.

08/58 OPEN FORUM

Q1 to 4 The following Questions were submitted in writing prior to the committee and were addressed together.

Brief outline

The Meadows Children and Family Wing which is a registered Charity were receiving £13,111 per annum from Cambridge Sure Start Local Programme

until the end of Sept 08. With the transition into Children's Centre there has not been a seamless transition, no new funding to apply for, no commissioning process or consultation / evaluation with the families who attend this service.

Q 1. Why has the funding for the popular Meadows Children and Family Wing drop-ins been cut by the County Council?

Brief outline

The Kings Hedges Family Support Project is a registered Charity that offers family support services to local families in the Wards of East Chesterton, Abbey and Kings Hedges. Set up initially with Government targeted funding administered through the Social Services department, then funded through an SLA with the Sure Start Local Programme funding. With the ending of this pot of money there are now no options available to source funding from the County Council even though we were informed that money for group work could be negotiated through individual Children Centre Managers.

Q 2. Is it acceptable to close a provision in the North City Children's Centre that has been running for the last 14 years working successfully with disadvantaged and hard to reach families?

Q 3. Whilst the County Council has decided it does not have the funds to support this work, they now appear to be saying that even if The Kings Hedges Family Support Project can financially support their 'Wednesday's Together' independently that they may not allow the renting of the room. Why is this?

The response to date has been that if parents cannot go to The North City Children's Centre for this service they can make their own way over to the Abbey Ward, Chesterton Ward or Meadows Estate which lots of families cannot do.

Q 4. Why are the views of parents and carers not being listened to?

A. Cambridgeshire County Council's Locality Manager Paul Connelly introduced himself and explained his new role in participating in Area Committee's to improve City / County Council joint working and communication.

He explained that Sure Start funding had been set at a rate of £650 per child and that the new Children's Centres were funded at £176 per child, effectively one-third of the previous funding. He also stated the need to be delivering the core offer by 2010.

County Cllr Gaynor Griffiths, the Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Children and Young People attended the meeting and stated that the situation was disappointing. The Meadows Children and Family Wing had been delivering good services for fourteen years funded by various sources including, the

Primary Care Trust and the Sure Start Programme. She spoke of an article in today's Cambridge Evening News in which the worry and distress this situation is causing vulnerable families who fear they will lose trusted family support workers is detailed.

A representative of Home-Start stated that they had fifty-four volunteers and others awaiting training. Why had they been invited to meeting to discuss transition funding arrangements when there was no intention of retaining the service. She suggested these discussions were termination meetings. There was a general view that the voluntary agencies has not been given a full picture of the potential changes in the period of the last 18 months. Paul Connelly said he had been assured by his colleagues that the project had been kept informed of changes and that consultation had been undertaken.

The representative from Home-Start said their volunteers are well trained, CRB checked and supervised by paid staff, for providing an unpaid service to the community. Why is the County proposing to replace them with paid employees?

Paul Connelly responded that while the voluntary agencies were encouraged to make bids for funding, there was not enough money to fund all the projects. Paul mentioned that there was a possibility of giving the Kings Hedges Family Support Project an additional year in the room at the Children Centre starting from April '09, based on agreed targets, giving time for them to work together. A meeting was being planned for the week beginning 5th Jan to discuss further. The County Council needs to meet targets as there is a risk of money being "clawed back" by Go East if they do not.

Cllr Blair stated that there are a number of Children Centres in the City that, at present, are little more than a collection of buildings offering no value to the community.

County Cllrs Wilkins and Huppert suggested that the Invest to Transform fund might offer a solution to the funding issues.

Action: Wendy Lansdown, Neighbourhood Panel Liaison Officer for the County to assist with this.

Discussion followed on the remit of the Children's Centres. A number of Councillors felt that the County were not showing enough funding support for third sector organisations. Paul Connelly explained that the County did fund a significant number of third sector organisations and gave the example of recent funding given to Romsey Mill for their work with teenage parents. Members were unhappy that the service would be target driven by a team who were not fully aware of the problems experienced by service users.

Cllr Pitt expressed frustration that the County Cabinet set priorities without ensuring the infrastructure was in place to deal with the Core Project Framework.

Cllr Ward wondered why no cabinet member from the County Council was present to defend their policy decisions.

The committee agreed that the Chair would write an open letter to Martin Curtis the County Council's Cabinet Member for Children, inviting him to the January North Area Committee meeting to respond to local residents concerns.

Action: Chair to write to Martin Curtis

Q 5. Guided Bus Forum

Members had previously suggested that the public attend the Guided Bus Forum. However, this meeting is not open to the public.

A. Members were unclear of the status of the meetings and suggested they achieve very little.

Q 6. Police Priorities

Why did members not request dwelling burglary be given the same priority this year as it had been given very effectively last winter?

A. Cllr Pitt clarified what had been agreed and dwelling burglary has been given priority status.

08/59 Recommendations for New Section 106 Projects

The officer introduced the report and explained the scoring system for various project used to arrive at the priority list.

Members of the committee discussed value for money and the difficulty in comparing various proposals without a more detailed breakdown on the cost involved and the added value they would bring to the community. Concerns were raised about location of the item one on the north area project list. This area is part of the flood plain and this must be taken into account. The officer confirmed that this has been considered.

Trim Trails were discussed and their visual appearance considered. Members were anxious that they should not intrude on the area. The officer confirmed that the fitness points already installed at Thorpe Way and Parkside Pool were proving very popular and are well used.

Members asked if the projects included the Nutalls Road S106 funding. The officer will look into this and respond.

Members were pleased to see the inclusion of toilets at allotments included in the proposals.

Discussion followed on the proposal to install distance signs on green spaces and Cllr Blair confirmed that she had discussed this with the Hed od Recreation Services who had confirmed that this is in line with the Sports Strategy.

Members debated the merits of the various project in the proposed priority list and agreed it unanimously.

Meeting finished at 10.10pm.

Chair