

EAST LUTON AREA COMMITTEE

9th July 2009 at 8.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Skepelhorn (Chair), Councillors Chapman, J. Davies, R. Davies, Dolling, Franks, Patterson and Rutstein

21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (REF: 1)

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Councillors Siederer and Smith.

22 MINUTES (REF: 2.1)

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 5th March 2009 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

23 MINUTES (REF: 2.2)

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 19th May 2009 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

24 RESOLUTIONS FROM WARD FORUMS

Stopsley Ward Forum

Members of the Barnfield Forum and residents commented that in view of the importance of the proposed swimming pool in the Stopsley and its possible effects on the Stopsley area, local people wished to be consulted by way of a public meeting on the design issues for the Centre. It was also agreed that full plans for the development and the appropriate Council officers be available at that meeting.

It was **resolved** to recommend to Executive:

(i) That before plans are finalised for the Luton Aquatic Centre, a public meeting be held in Stopsley so that the concerns of local residents are addressed at an early stage.

(ii) That full displays of the plans for the Aquatic Centre be available at that meeting and that appropriate Council Officers be in attendance to answer any questions.

Crawley Ward Forum

The Crawley Ward Forum Members and residents wished to record their agreement that engineers go ahead with the parking regulation changes outside of Wenlock Junior School, Beaconsfield. It was advised that the next stage of the process would be the publication of the statutory notices.

Round Green Forum

A number of Round Green residents had expressed concern regarding the possibility of development on Abbotswood Road Park. Concern was also expressed about the lack of investment in this park, which was a well-needed resource for the area.

Resolved: that the Play Strategy Manager be requested to report back to the Area Committee on the reasons why no resources had been identified from the Play Strategy Fund for improvements to the Abbotswood Road park.

Wigmore Ward Forum

Members and residents at the Ward Forum expressed their concern that the "OK Corral" in Wigmore Lane had still not been repaired

The Members took a view that the repairs and work to the area of paving in Wigmore should take place and in the first instance the cost to be met from the East Luton Area Committee budget (minor highway repairs). However, Members also instructed that this cost should be recouped from the respective service area that was responsible for this piece of land.

25 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (REF: 8)

1. A member of the public advised that he had read an article in 'Locomotive Magazine' reporting that the proposed Luton Dunstable Busway would also be used as a heritage railway line.

Councillor Franks advised that he was not aware of this proposal but that he would follow it up with Council officers.

2. A question was asked relating to the Council's position on the development of small 1 and 2 bedroom flats across Luton particularly where planning approval had been granted for the conversion of family homes into flats and bed-sits.

Councillor Franks advised that private developers carried out most of the developments and conversions. Planning consent would have to be granted unless there were genuine planning reasons to refuse an application. If Government planning guidance was disregarded by a local planning

authority an appeal would be lodged and upheld with costs being awarded to the applicant.

3. A member of the public enquired about the flats at the bottom of Eaton Green Road and why they were empty and not being utilised for accommodation.

The Chair advised that the building was not flats but purpose designed student accommodation and not useable as family homes. The meeting was further advised that the university had signed a contract with the landlord which had many years to run and whether the building was empty or not the landlord was still paid, therefore there was no incentive for the landlord to develop the site for a more appropriate use. It was suggested that Council officers should be requested to investigate whether the building could be repossessed as empty homes as they had been vacant for more than 6 months.

4. A question was asked about the East Luton corridor, which had now been completed and opened. The 18 month contract for the work had overrun by 16 months and the Committee was asked if the Council had received any damages from the contractor for the delay. The meeting was informed that no financial details had been made available and that the legal implications of the contract were currently being reviewed. It was known, however, that a 'liquidated damages for delay clause had been included in the original contract. Once the legal dispute between the Council and the contractor had been resolved, a further update on this matter would be submitted to the next available meeting of this Committee.
5. A member of the public asked about the reduced hours of the Town Hall Cash Hall for those wishing to make payments to the Council. This was a particular problem for those residents with a Post Office Account who were limited in payment choices.

Councillor Rutstein agreed to look into the matter.

Resolved: That the questions and comments raised by members of the public be noted.

26 PETITION OF OBJECTION TO DEVELOPMENT OF THE EAST OF LUTON (REF: 9.1)

The Committee was advised of the receipt of a petition objecting to proposed development to the East of Luton.

The Committee noted that the petition had been forwarded to the Joint Technical Unit as a formal objection to the publication of the Preferred Options Core Strategy for Luton and Southern Bedfordshire on 9th June 2009. The matter was

also submitted to the Executive on 22nd June for information only, as the subject matter was outside the Executive's remit.

Resolved: That the report (Ref: 9.1) be noted.

27 PETITION – REQUEST FOR THE REDUCTION OF WAITING RESTRICTIONS IN ROSEWOOD CLOSE (REF: 9.2)

The Committee was advised of the receipt of a petition for the reduction of waiting restrictions in Rosewood Close. It was noted that the double yellow lines had been introduced in 1986 to prevent a car dealer from parking a number of cars in the vicinity. The extent of the restrictions was considered excessive for present day conditions and it was suggested that much of the restriction could be removed subject to funds being available in the 2010/11 or 2011/12 financial years.

Resolved: That the report (Ref: 9.2) be noted.

28 STREET SEEN (REF: 10)

The Street Seen Project Co-ordinator updated the Committee on the work of Street Seen, which was now in its fourth year. The scheme relied on voluntary 'street champions' to report areas of concern to either a Freephone number or a dedicated email address.

The scheme was being expanded into schools to recruit 'junior champions'. This was partly to promote increased responsibility among young people for an area and also because young people had a different viewpoint to adults. They may notice things that adults would not. Putteridge Junior School would be part of the programme starting in September.

Resolved: That the report (Ref: 10) be noted.

29 INTEGRATED YOUTH SUPPORT SERVICES (REF: 11)

A report was submitted (Ref: 11) detailing the current Youth Service activities and developments in the Crawley, Round Green, Stopsley and Wigmore Wards and in particular the services provided for young people at the Putteridge Youth Club.

In relation to the report on International Women's Day, it was suggested that the activities arranged for the girls who took part could be more adventurous and imaginative than those for this year, i.e. making pompoms, smoothie making preparation of chicken and general girly chats.

It was noted that the Ashcroft Park Fun Day, which had been held on 27th May, had been a great success. Further expenditure was planned for the park and the meeting was informed that additional funding was available to enhance other

play areas in the East of Luton from the Play Builders Fund managed by the Play Strategy Manager. It was suggested that the Abbotswood Road site could benefit from this.

30 AREA REPORT (REF: 12)

The Area Committee Support Officer updated the Committee on issues that were raised following the last meeting held on 5th March 2009.

- The Committee was advised that the ongoing work under the Neighbourhood Crime and Justice Pioneer Area Agenda was continuing and that Luton had been doing very well as a pilot area for the scheme and it was advised that crime in Luton was reducing significantly.
- Twenty people in Luton had attended a training programme for the Community Crime Fighters Initiative and a second tranche of training would be run in the autumn.
- Luton was one of a handful of areas that had been selected by the Home Office to pilot the new 'Safer Streets' website. The website was designed to facilitate the sharing of information at a local level between the public and local organisations in the crime and Disorder Reduction partnership (CDRP) such as the Council and the Police.

The Area Committee Support Officer then advised the Committee of the receipt of three applications to the area project fund:

Project No	Project	Cost of Project	Amount Requested	Decision
ALL 344	<p><u>AKEBA</u></p> <p>Akeba wished to support the Change4Life campaign and other health campaigns within its work to promote cultural awareness in the local community. Akeba currently delivered various cultural workshops, activities and educational events and would like to deliver a new focus to one of those events. Fun days were in local parks are easily accessed by the community and a park would be the perfect forum to launch this healthy living project, as being active in green spaces was part of the overall ethos. It would be an</p>	£6,500	£1,000 Per area committee	<p>£1,000 subject to the following conditions:</p> <p>i) the same amount was agreed by the other Area Committees</p> <p>ii) that concern be expressed to the Area Committee Board that Area Committee funding was</p>

	<p>all day event on the weekend to maximise its potential to reach the public.</p> <p>The application was being made to all area committees as they had found residents from all areas attended their events and it was more cost effective to hold one large event rather than five separate ones for this particular project. The Group also believed that the project's aims would be better achieved when a larger group of the community were involved to spread the message and therefore the project was suitable as a town wide event.</p> <p>The event could be delivered through a planning and delivery cycle of three months to enable the appropriate level of promotion to the public.</p>			limited and intended to support local schemes in that area, not town wide events.
ALL 348	<p><u>LOVE MUSIC HATE RACISM</u></p> <p>The aim of the project was to plan a one day festival on the 16th August 2009 with music and dance with stalls also from a multi-cultural background. The extended summer festival stage had been granted from the Luton Cultural Trust and this would be used for singers, bands and dances from all cultures and religions. The project would target events in 5 wards in partnership with other community groups, which would culminate into a major event.</p>	£4,000	£500 per area committee .	<p>£500 subject to the following conditions:</p> <p>i) that the Head of Local Democracy be requested to investigate whether the event could be funded from the underspend in the preventing Violent Extremism Budget</p> <p>ii) the same amount was</p>

				<p>agreed by the other Area Committees</p> <p>iii) that concern be expressed to the Area Committee Board that Area Committee funding was limited and intended to support local schemes in that area, not town wide events.</p>
BA/AL L 341	<p><u>Stepping Stones (Luton)</u></p> <p>Stepping Stones was registered as a Community Interest Company in May 2008 with the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * To carry on activities that are beneficial to the wider community but in particular to women who have drug or alcohol related issues * To preserve and protect the good health of women who are in danger of becoming addicted to or are already dependant on drugs or alcohol and to educate the community about the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse * To relieve poverty, physical, mental and emotional distress among women affected by the above issues by providing them with various activities and a safe environment where they can feel free to express themselves and 	£25,643	£15,643 i.e. £3,128 per area committee	£1,000 subject to the same amount being agreed by the other Area Committees

	<p>access support whilst maintaining links with other service providers across the town.</p> <p>* To enhance the skills and qualifications of women recovering from substance misuse to enable them to take up learning or rehabilitation opportunities</p> <p>* To provide childcare and transport facilities and improve accessibility for women to attend various services across Luton for example; social services, probation, courts, housing etc.</p> <p>In the short time that they have been running their service their hopes and dreams have been more than exceeded and they now need further funding to continue our childcare facility and expand.</p> <p>Their childcare facilities opened in July 2008. They have 3 NVQ3 qualified members of staff and 5 volunteers currently working in the setting. They have 24 children currently attending their childcare facility 18 of which are referrals from other agencies such as social services or probation. Stepping Stones (Luton) childcare facility is Ofsted registered and free. They recently received a good comment at a recent Ofsted Inspection.</p> <p>They have built fantastic relationships with not only mothers but grandmothers, carers and fathers. Their aim is to make a difference to the family as a whole and not just to work with the women. They have good links with the Children's Services, Social Services, Family Workers and Health Visitors.</p>			
--	---	--	--	--

	<p>They are currently working on a Stepping Stones Youth project as they have found that although they have the childcare facility many of their clients have teenage children and it has quickly become apparent that the 11 - 19 years age group need support dealing with issues that may have arisen within their family due to the parents' misuse.</p> <p>The childcare facility provides the children with food, clothes, nappies, outings, love and friendship and is a very safe, secure environment where mothers can feel at ease leaving their children so that they can make progression in their lives.</p> <p>They also offer a parenting programme to the whole community of Luton. They have two trained members of staff that can offer this programme called Strengthening Families Strengthening Communities, it is a programme based on encouraging a violence free community.</p>			
--	---	--	--	--

Resolved: (i) That the report (Ref: 12) be noted.

(ii) That the applications under the Area Project Scheme be decided as indicated above.

(Note: The meeting ended at 9.45 p.m.)