

## **SOUTH LUTON AREA COMMITTEE**

**5<sup>th</sup> October 2004 at 7.30 p.m.**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Boyle (Chair); Councillors Ashraf, Bashir, Farooq, Hoyle, Ireland, McGarvie, McKenzie and Timoney.

### **3 MINUTES (REF: 2.1 AND 2.2)**

**Resolved:** That the Minutes of the meetings of the Area Committee held on 27<sup>th</sup> May, 2004 and 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2004 be taken as read, approved as correct records and signed by the Chair.

### **4 FEEDBACK FROM MINI WARD FORUMS (REF: 6)**

Feedback from the mini-ward Forums that had preceded the meeting of the Area Committee was provided. The main issues raised were:-

#### Dallow Ward

- Traffic calming
- Parking on pavements
- Drugs/alcohol/prostitution/anti-social behaviour/fly-tipping
- Police presence

#### Farley and South Wards

- Nuisance youths
- One-way systems around New Town/Park Town
- Traffic congestion in the town centre caused by road works

All the issues raised would be followed up and reported back to the next meeting of the Area Committee.

**Resolved:** That the report be noted.

### **5 PETITION – BERESFORD ROAD – AGAINST THE TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES INTRODUCED (REF: 8.2)**

The Head of Engineering and Transportation reported with regard to the receipt of a petition from residents of Beresford Road who had expressed opposition to the recently introduced traffic system in the Portland Road area, and particularly its effect on Beresford Road.

The Committee was advised that the scheme had been the subject of an area wide consultation. Out of 603 leaflets delivered to all households in the area 213 responses had been received. Of those, 71% were happy with the proposals. One response had been received from Beresford Road that had expressed opposition to the scheme.

A Member commented that the current situation in Beresford Road was dangerous because cars parked on both sides of the road and he thought the whole scheme should be looked at again.

**Resolved:** That the Head of Engineering and Transportation be requested to consider the comments made at the meeting and submit a further report on the matter to the next meeting of the Committee.

**6 PETITION – GATE TO EXTERNAL COMMUNAL AREA 260-274 WHIPPERLEY RING (REF: 8.3)**

The Head of Housing (Landlord) reported with regard to a petition received in relation to the proposal to re-open one of the gates to the external communal area and seal the other gate at 260-274 Whipperley Ring.

The Committee was advised that in April 2004 a consultation letter had been sent requesting residents' views on a proposal to re-open the sealed gate. Unfortunately, the letter had not clarified that the proposal was to re-open one gate but seal the other. Therefore, a decision had been taken to undertake the consultation process again.

15 letters had been sent out in the second consultation and of the 10 replies received, 8 of those had registered their objection to the proposal and 2 agreed. On the basis of the responses received, it was agreed that the gate would not be re-opened in line with the majority view.

**Resolved:** (i) That receipt of the petition be noted.

(ii) That it be noted that, following consultation with the residents, the proposal has now been abandoned.

**7 PETITION – ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN ST. JOHNS CLOSE AND ST. JOHNS COURT (REF: 8.4)**

The Head of Housing (Landlord) reported with regard to the actions taken by the Tenancy Enforcement Team to deal with complaints of alleged anti-social and nuisance behaviour by youths/young people in St. Johns Close and St. Johns Court.

The Committee was advised that residents had been requested to log the anti-social/nuisance behaviour incidents on diary sheets but to date no incident diary sheets had been returned.

A Member enquired whether the land at the back of Roebuck Close had been considered for activities for young people to prevent anti-social behaviour. The Head of Housing (Landlord) responded that attempts were being made to identify the owner of the land.

**Resolved:** (i) That receipt of the petition be noted.

(ii) That the ongoing actions being taken by the Council's Tenancy Enforcement Team be noted.

**8 PETITION – CONDITIONS AT FARLEY LODGE, RUTHIN CLOSE, LUTON (REF: 8.5)**

The Head of Housing (Private Sector) reported with regard to the current situation at Farley Lodge, Ruthin Close.

The Committee was advised that a full inspection of the site had been undertaken and that a notice had been served to establish who the owner was and the maintenance responsibility. That information had now been obtained and a maintenance notice would be served.

A Member enquired as to the current position with regard to the derelict garages at the top of the site. The Head of Housing responded that they remained secured and locked up by the freeholder.

**Resolved:** (i) That receipt of the petition be noted.

(ii) That the Private Sector Housing Section be instructed to progress repair of the properties without undue delay.

**9 PETITION – ZEBRA CROSSING OUTSIDE FOXDELL INFANT SCHOOL (REF: 8.6)**

That Head of Engineering and Transportation reported with regard to receipt of a petition from residents of Dallow Road that highlighted concerns with the increased noise generated by the new raised table zebra crossing outside Foxdell Infant School.

A petitioner present at the meeting commented that she remained very concerned that vehicles were still driving too fast and that she often found debris from vehicles outside her property.

**Resolved:** (i) That receipt of the petition be noted.

(ii) That it be noted that the Head of Engineering and Transportation has instructed the contractor concerned to correct the profile of the ramps to the raised table zebra crossing as a matter of urgency.

**10 PETITION – TRAFFIC LIGHTS FROM HIBBERT STREET TO WINDSOR STREET (REF: 8.7)**

The Head of Engineering and Transportation reported on a petition received with regard to traffic lights from Hibbert Street to Windsor Street.

The petition stated that the traffic lights had recently been adjusted to only 9 seconds for pedestrians to cross. It also raised the issue of traffic turning illegally left from Windsor Street into Castle Street.

The Head of Engineering and Transportation advised that the timing of the lights, which had been incorrect, had now been rectified and that the

whole arrangement was due to be replaced as part of the Matalan development.

The Head of Engineering and Transportation further reported that it was difficult to get the timings/capacity right but that no pedestrian accidents had occurred at the pedestrian crossing in Castle Street.

A Member enquired whether some sort of enforcement could be considered. The Head of Engineering and Transportation responded that a traffic safety camera could be installed with regard to safety issues, e.g. speed related crashes and red-light 'jumping' but not currently for illegal turners.

**Resolved:** That receipt of the petition and the report be noted.

## **11 NUISANCE AND DAMAGE CAUSED BY BALL PLAYING (REF: 8.8)**

The Area Committee Support Officer reported with regard to a petition that had been received from residents of Barnard Road which had requested the erection of a "no ball games" sign. He added that although there was no statute to enforce the sign it had improved the problem in other parts of the town.

The Community Safety Officer reported that the beat officer had agreed to patrol the area concerned when he could but to date no offenders had been identified. He added that if the situation continued to deteriorate, residents would be requested to provide statements and consideration given to what legal action could be taken.

The Chair commented that the issue was extremely serious.

The Community Safety Officer advised those present that in the first instance the Police must be called, not the Council.

A member of the public suggested that a youth worker visit. The Community Safety Officer reported that he had been working closely with a youth worker to engage young people.

**Resolved:** (i) That receipt of the petition be noted.

(ii) That no action be taken at this stage in response to the petitioners' request for a "no ball games" sign to be erected because enforcement is not possible.

## **12 WARD FOCUSED CRIME, HALF YEARLY REPORTS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY (REF: 9)**

The Committee received a joint presentation by Chief Superintendent Twydell of Bedfordshire Police and Sergeant Daize, representing the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, with regard to ward focused crime, half yearly reports and the Community Safety Strategy.

Chief Superintendent Twydell requested views from members of the public as to what issues they considered important for inclusion in the Community Safety Strategy. He added that although crime in Luton South had decreased, it had not been as marked as in the rest of the town.

Sergeant Daize reported that it was an opportunity to have an input into the next Community Safety Strategy 2005-2008.

The presentation specifically covered the following areas:

- Crime trends in Luton between 1999 and 2004
- Crime distribution
- Crime rates by area 2003/04 (covering Luton, Bedfordshire, England and Wales)
- Local crime distribution (types of crime)

Members of the public present were invited to answer the following 3 questions:

1. What should continue to be in the Community Safety Strategy?
2. What are the areas that we should be improving?
3. How can we best address the fear of crime within Luton?

**Resolved:** That the report be noted.

### **13 DRAFT STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY – CONSULTATION (REF: 10)**

The Head of Environmental and Consumer Services reported with regard to a draft statement prepared by the Council relating to licensing policy.

The Committee was advised that the draft policy was out for consultation until 19<sup>th</sup> November, and once final approval was given by the Executive and the Council, would come into effect in February 2005.

Licensees must produce an operating schedule identifying how they would meet four licensing objectives:

- Prevention of crime and disorder
- Public safety
- Prevention of public nuisance
- Protection of children from harm

**Resolved:** That the report be noted.

### **14 LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN (REF: 11)**

The Transportation Projects Manager reported with regard to the Local Transport Plan which was required to be submitted to the Government by the end of July 2005.

The key issues were:

- Overall structure of the second Local Transport Plan
- Continuing themes from the first Local Transport Plan
- Car ownership/mode of travel to work
- Future development
- Local residents

**Resolved:** That the report be noted.

## **15 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, ADULT EDUCATION AND YOUTH SERVICE (REF: 12)**

The Committee had before it a report of the Head of Community Education and Development with regard to the current activities and developments in the Dallow, Farley and South Wards.

**Resolved:** That the report be noted.

## **16 APPROVAL OF WORKS – LIVEABILITY (REF: 13)**

The Parks Manager reported with regard to the vision plan for the Dallow Road Recreation Ground, the traffic calming measures for the Dallow area, the improvements to the St. Peter's Road corner funded by liveability, nature near home and the local transport plan.

In addition, the Committee received a presentation by the consultants engaged on the project.

The Committee was advised that the project would be completed in March 2006.

A member of the public commented that public consultation should have been undertaken with the remainder of the Dallow Ward, not just the roads in the vicinity of the recreation ground.

The Parks Manager suggested that a community caretaker group be formed to obtain the public's views before the final plan was agreed.

**Resolved:** (i) That the indicative vision plan containing the requested improvements as listed in paragraph 18 of the report of the Head of Street Services (Ref: 13) be approved subject to the available budget.

(ii) That approval be given for a community caretakers group to be established to assist in the finalising of the detailed plan, implementation and the subsequent caring for the park.

## **17 REFURBISHMENT OF STOCKWOOD PARK PUBLIC TOILETS (REF: 14)**

The Area Committee Support Officer reported with regard to the public toilet blocks in Stockwood Park.

The Committee was advised that high levels of vandalism had been experienced at Luton's public toilets, including the two in Stockwood Park. The roof had been severely damaged at the toilet block next to the entrance to Stockwood Park on Farley Hill.

Costing had been obtained for a number of options in regard to each site, including the two public toilets in Stockwood Park. The options included refurbishing the current toilet blocks, replacement them with system built units on the same locations as the old toilet block, in order to minimize connection charges to services, and closing some of the older buildings and demolishing them.

**Resolved:** That a system brick built unit at Stockwood Park be supported and that urgent consideration be given to the proposal in the budget process for next year.

## **18 YOUTH FACILITIES – BARNFIELD COLLEGE, ROTHERAM AVENUE (REF: 15)**

The Head of Community Development and Education reported with regard to youth facilities at Barnfield College, Rotheram Avenue site.

The Committee was advised that the facilities had last been used prior to 2001. There had been a number of attempts by the Council to re-occupy the building but a number of obstacles had been posed by the college because no formal agreement was in place.

A site visit had been undertaken and the college had been informed by letter that the Council wished to re-occupy the facilities on the same basis as previously otherwise it would consider taking legal action. No response had been received.

Some facilities previously used were still available but not the sports hall because it was full of fitted, permanent structures.

A Member commented that the community of Farley Ward had been shut out for too long and it was a disgrace.

**Resolved:** (i) That the Head of Community Education and Development be requested to pursue all means possible, including legal action, to ensure that the facilities are reinstated.

(ii) That the Head of Community Education and Development be requested to make enquiries regarding planning permission for the fitted, permanent structures in the sports hall at the site.

## **19 AREA REPORT (REF: 16)**

The Area Committee Support Officer updated the Committee on issues that had been raised following the last meeting of the Committee held on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2004.

In addition, Members' views were sought with regard to one new application for an area based project and three projects that the Committee had agreed in principle.

**Resolved:** (i) That the report be noted.

(ii) That the following application be approved:-

Scheme	Ward	Cost	Amount Requested	Amount Awarded
<b>Reference DA 129</b> <b><u>Mary Seacole</u></b> <b><u>Housing Association</u></b> Setting up of an IT Suite within the Training Project.	Dallow	£5,000	£5,000	£900

(iii) That the following applications, previously agreed in principle, be confirmed:-

Scheme	Ward	Cost	Amount Requested	Amount Awarded
<b>Reference FA 137</b> <b><u>Farley Junior Youth Club</u></b> To take a group of 40 young people on an adventure holiday during the course of the October 2004 Half Term holiday period.	Farley	£3,000	£200	£200
<b>Reference FA 138</b> <b><u>Wolston Close, Luton</u></b> Erection of a 2.4 metres palisade fence.	Farley	£821.00	£821.00	£950.00

(iv) That, in respect of the following application, the Area Committee Support Officer be requested to discuss the application and the project with the Club with a view to a similar scheme being implemented during the course of the October 2004 half term holiday

(v) That, following the action taken in (iv) above, the Area Committee Support Officer be authorised to approve the requested funding provided that there is evidence of dates for the scheme to take place, a programme of the activities that will be provided and appropriate promotion of the scheme particularly focused on the young people in the Farley area.



Scheme	Ward	Cost	Amount Requested
<b>Reference FA 139</b> <b><u>Barnfield Colts F.C</u></b> To fund a two-week football-training course, running for ten days.	Farley	£600.00	£450.00

- (Note: (1) The Chair requested that it be recorded that with regard to Application No. DA 129 (Mary Seacole Housing Association) the views of the people in attendance had been disregarded.
- (2) Councillors McGarvie, McKenzie and Timoney disclosed a personal and prejudicial interest in relation to the above item, insofar as it related to the application from Mary Seacole Housing Association, and left the meeting during consideration of the matter.)

## 20 AGENDA PLANNING (REF: 18)

**Resolved:** (i) That an update on Translink be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the Committee.

(ii) That the issue of the length of future Area Committee agendas be referred to a future meeting of the Area Committee Board for consideration.

- (Note: (1) **Agenda Item 8.1 (Petition – Medina Road to be made one-way) was withdrawn from the agenda at the lead petitioner's request.**
- (2) **Apologies were submitted prior to the meeting by the Lead Officer for the Committee (Colin Chick).**
- (3) **The meeting ended at 10.10 p.m.)**