

NORTH LUTON AREA COMMITTEE

19th September 2007 at 7.45 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Garrett (Chair); Councillors Bullock, R. J. Davis, Foord, Hinkley, Pedersen, Simons, Titmuss and Worthing.

45 MINUTES (REFS: 2.1 AND 2.2)

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 22nd and 31st May 2007 be taken as read, approved as correct records and signed by the Chair.

46 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: CORE STRATEGY ISSUES AND OPTIONS PAPER (REF: 6.1)

The Strategic Planning Manager advised the Committee of consultation being undertaken by the Luton and South Bedfordshire Joint Committee in relation to the Local Development Framework – core strategy issues and options paper.

He identified the 10 options that had been identified on the basis of 5 criteria, namely:-

- Limiting development to within the by-passes;
- Not limiting development to within the by-passes;
- Locating development close to the town centres and major employment areas;
- Widespread distribution of development; and
- Locating development close to Luton town centre with a high and a low land-take in each instance.

He further advised on the five issues for consideration:

- Where will development go?
- Where will people work? And in what sorts of jobs?
- How will people travel?
- What role will our town centres have?
- How can our communities and neighbourhoods be more inclusive, sustainable and healthy?

The Strategic Planning Manager advised that copies of the paper were available at the meeting and urged members of the public to take a copy and respond to the consultation paper by 26th October 2007.

Resolved: That the report (Ref: 6.1) be noted.

(Note: The above item was considered by the Committee in pursuance of Sections 100B(4) and 100E(1) of the Local

Government Act 1972, the Chair having considered that the item should be dealt with as a matter of urgency in order that there be no delay in information being given to the Committee)

47 POLICE QUESTIONS (REF: 8.2)

Police Officers and Police Community Safety Officers were present at the meeting to take questions from members of the public.

PC McCaffrey advised that through an enhanced police presence during the last week, in the Sundon Park and Marsh Farm areas 20 cars had been removed from drivers with either no driving licence or no insurance.

PC Smith, Casualty Reduction Officer advised that all officers in the section had been called to deal with crime and anti terrorism duties and therefore speed checks would be undertaken by the casualty reduction partnership officers. He further advised that it was hoped that officer duties would be clarified by the end of September.

Members of the public raised concern about kids smoking cannabis and cannabis factories.

PC McCaffrey advised that drug issues were very serious and lead to more serious crime such as burglaries etc. and that the Police seized a significant amount of drugs in Luton each week.

The Area Committee Support Officer advised members of the public of comment forms available at the meeting that could be completed and forwarded to the Police if there were particular issues to be imparted.

The Chair thanked the Police for their attendance and contribution to the meeting.

Resolved: That the report (Ref: 8.2) be noted.

48 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (REF: 9)

Wardown Swimming Baths – Future and Attendance by Chief Executive of Active Luton to respond to public questions

The Head of Leisure and Community advised the Committee that the intention was to close Wardown Swimming Baths as and when a replacement could be provided. The Council held a contract with Active Luton to run Wardown Swimming Baths. The building was very energy inefficient and had largely come to the end of its working life and therefore it was not prudent to spend money on the facility and staff were doing what they could to keep it running.

The Senior Facility Manager, Wardown Swimming Baths advised that until a firm decision had been reached the facility still had to be operational. Work to the changing areas and reception had be necessary due to Health and Safety issues.

A member of the public enquired if the new pool would be at the same location as the current Wardown Swimming Baths?

Councillor R. J. Davis advised that the new pool would go wherever the Council could put it and the importance was that Luton had a new pool. He further advised that a senior group of officers had been formed to find a way forward as the Council were committed to achieving a new pool for Luton.

A member of the public enquired what size pool was hoped to be built?

Councillor R. J. Davis advised that the plan was for a 50 metre pool. He commented that the town needed to rediscover ambition and that a change of attitude to 'can do will do' was needed.

Members of the public present applauded Councillor Davis's response.

A member of the public advised that the Luton Leisure Gardens Association had raised £1,905 for the Pasque Hospice.

Resolved: That the report (Ref: 9) be noted.

49 PETITION – LEAGRAVE PARK – ACCESS FROM PARK VIEW CLOSE (REF: 10.1)

The Parks and Cemeteries Manager advised the Committee on the receipt of a petition from the residents of Park View Close requesting the access into Leagrave Park be closed to reduce the problems being experienced with nuisance youths.

The Lead Petitioner addressed the Committee advising that many local residents, not just those in Park View Close were in favour of closure of the entrance/exit due to the anti-social behaviour being experienced during both daytime and at night. It was felt that the most effective way to address the issue was to close the entrance completely as there were other entrances in close proximity. If the only solution was to install a gate he suggested it should have a s-shaped bend and that it should be high enough to deter people from climbing over it and that residents had not been keen to be keyholders and open/close the gate.

Another local resident addressed the Committee advising that the distress, abuse, vandalism and general anti-social behaviour being experienced by residents of the area far outweighed the inconvenience to others through closure of the entrance/exit.

The Local Ward Councillors appreciated the problems being experienced in Park View Close but stressed that the entrance had been in that location for more than 40 years and that numerous members of the public had approached them stating that they did not want the entrance/exit closed as it was used by people to get to Leagrave railway station.

Members debated the procedure entailed in closing the entrance/exit as it was already an established public right of way.

The Parks and Cemeteries Manager advised that the main issue was that of anti-social behaviour which was a matter for the Police.

Resolved: (i) That the installation of a gate at the point entry/exit to the park and for the residents to be given permission to lock/unlock at times to be agreed with the Parks and Cemeteries Manager be approved.

(ii) That the installation of a temporary sign at the entrance Park View Close warning pedestrians of the closure times be approved.

(iii) That in consultation with Councillor Worthing, the right be reserved to reverse the decision, in the event of a large adverse public reaction.

(iv) That the Marsh Farm Community Wardens be instructed to include patrols in this area and to provide the residents with their contact details.

50 PETITION - CONSULTATION WITH RESIDENTS OF MARSH FARM ABOUT THE PROPOSED REDESIGN AND REDEVELOPMENT OF THE MARSH FARM CENTRAL AREA (REF: 10.2)

The Head of Regeneration advised the Committee of the receipt of a petition regarding the consultation with residents of Marsh Farm about the proposed redesign and redevelopment of the Marsh Farm central area and further advised that the petition would be reported to the Executive meeting to be held on 1st October 2007.

Resolved: That the report (Ref: 10.2) be noted.

(Note: The above item was considered by the Committee in pursuance of Sections 100B(4) and 100E(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chair having considered that the item should be dealt with as a matter of urgency in order that there be no delay in informing the Committee.)

51 ICKNIELD RECREATION GROUND – CAR PARKING ISSUE (REF: 11)

The Parks and Cemeteries Manager updated the Committee on a possible solution in respect of people congregating at Limbury car park in that bollards and a gate which would have the effect of bringing any illicit activity that may be carried out into view from the road.

Councillor Simons suggested that lighting should be fitted to the area.

The Parks and Cemeteries Manager advised that the cost of improved lighting could not be met from within current budgets but that the installation of bollards and a gate could.

Councillor Simons suggested that the issue of lighting be added to the Parks work programme so that money could be identified in future year's budgets.

Resolved: That the Parks and Cemeteries Manager be instructed to install bollards and a gate in the position identified on the plan attached at Appendix B to the report (Ref: 11).

52 CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING A NO COLD CALLING ZONE (REF: 12)

The Consumer Support Team Leader, Trading Standards advised the Committee on the background of the criteria for establishing a 'no cold calling zone':

- a) reported incidents to trading standards of rogue trader activity;
- b) crime statistics from the police of reported distraction burglaries in the area (there is a proven link with (a) above);
- c) the target properties - predominantly owner/occupier, mature housing stock; and

a strong and organised community presence in place, for example, Neighbourhood Watch.

He advised that areas were chosen due to their being targeted by rogue traders. He advised members of the public to report rogue traders on the 24-hour hotline (547100) and advised that the stickers/booklets available at the meeting could also be requested on that number.

A member of the public enquired if the Council had a list of friendly traders i.e. plumbers etc.

The Consumer Support Team Leader, Trading Standards advised members of the public to check the Council website as trading standards would be issuing the first certificates of confidence in local traders.

Members discussed the possibility of making the whole of Luton a no cold calling zone and suggested that Scrutiny be requested to investigate the issue.

Resolved: That the Scrutiny Board be requested to investigate the feasibility of making the whole of Luton a no cold calling zone.

53 CONSULTATION DRAFT OF LUTON RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (REF: 13)

The Transportation Strategy Manager reported on the production of a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) as required by government. The Luton RoWIP was based on the following five key themes:

- A better signed, maintained and accessible network for the whole community
- Improved promotion of rights of way
- Improved health and well-being of residents
- Enhanced management of green space and rights of way with updated definitive map
- Safety and security –lighting, underpasses, code of conduct on multi-user routes

He further advised that the council wanted to consult as many people as possible. An article had been included in the October edition of Lutonline indicating that copies of the consultation document were available at libraries and community centres, and on request from Mark Walters on 546255. He urged members of the public to complete and return the questionnaire appended to the consultation document.

Resolved: That the report (Ref: 13) be noted.

54 LUTON YOUTH SERVICE UPDATE (REF: 14)

The Luton Youth Service submitted a summary of the youth work projects – September 2007:

Project work had taken place with young people over recent months:

- Workshops on drugs, alcohol, gangs, healthy eating, eating disorders, sexual health and relationships and arranged marriages.
- Longer-term projects include a music production, relationships/PSHE in schools, football skills, first aid and use of the Boom Bus in Hockwell.
- The Teen Learning Centre (TLC) continues to offer a holistic health provision for young people with a variety of partner agencies.
- Mobile skate park activity as part of the Leagrave youth festival
- The BMX group continue to meet and the young people are currently designing the BMX track that will be located in the Leagrave Park.
- The areas young voice group is established and influenced the summer programme and were involved in wider transport issues and continue to look participate and makes decisions that affect the service direction.

- Outreach work running up to the summer period in the sundon area on Friday evenings surveying young people on their interests and encouraging them to be involved in positive activities.

Summer projects during August took place at the centres and area wide trips were organised on feedback from the young voice group as follows: -

- Street Dance, Junior Football Association course, Web design course, Go Karting, roller Skating, swimming, Thorpe Park, disability friendship scheme, and residential to Blackpool and Youth Hostel in Cheshunt

The youth service will be holding an award event for young people on the 9th November to celebrate their achievements and receive certificates.

Resolved: That the report (Ref: 14) be noted.

55 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE (REF: 15)

The Unit Development Manager, Jubilee/Limbury/Sundon Community Centres submitted an update report:

- 2 community centre development officers currently resource area North;
- lack of staff had caused significant challenges in terms of services being stretched in management operations in all the centres;
- receptionist post still unfilled
- Jubilee Community Centre had extended its program in identifying new groups and increasing capacity building of several groups;
- Marsh Farm lunch club – currently 319 people on the register and regular attendance of 60 people per session. Group increased from 2 to 3 sessions per week. The unit development manager was working with the group to assist with employing a part time co-ordinator to liaise with centre officers in developing a community development support plan for the group;
- Community Centre staff worked once again with members of New Deal within a multi agency framework in helping to organise the Marsh Farm Festival in July 2007 – which was a great success with a good turn out;
- Bedfordshire and Luton MIND Group were now based at Jubilee Community Centre – the group aims to offer friendship, respect opportunity and choice to improve the lives of people with a range of mental health needs. The support group had established links with other user groups and was a real asset to the centre;
- The unit development manager was involved with Marsh Farm outreach team in promoting the centre for 'Celebration of localisation event' the event on 8th September was to show and celebrate talent and resources the area had in improving access to practical enterprise learning opportunities for local people and what

could be achieved by working together and developing community organisations and enterprise;

- Limbury – unit development manager working in development of centre programme. Increase in number of groups using centre. Liaison with Hebrew community who have taken a regular booking. Multi-agency group holding meetings to address specific issues such as anti-social behaviour – 'Friends of Runfold' were supported by Community Safety, local PCSO's and local volunteers;
- Unit Development Manager liaising with Sundon Trust to resolve outstanding health and safety issues – pathway maintenance and rodent infestations. Review of recommendations of the Sundon Park Business Plan with a view to developing priorities in partnership with the Trust. With regular staffing it was hopeful to re-engage with the Trust in terms of community engagement for the area.

Resolved: That the report (Ref: 15) be noted.

56 REPLACEMENT OF SECURITY GUARD – PURLEY CENTRE – PROGRESS REPORT (REF: 16)

The Head of Local Democracy updated the Committee on the issue of replacement of security guard – Purley Centre:

- Cop shop open in December 2007
- Neighbourhood warden in place and feedback good
- Housing lose security guard in September 2007
- A review of estate security underway

Resolved: That the report (Ref: 16) be noted.

58 AREA REPORT (REF: 17)

The Area Committee Support Officer updated the Committee on issues that were raised following the last meeting and informed the Committee of the latest position in regard to the area projects budget.

The Committee considered two applications under the Area Project Scheme:

Project Number	Project	Cost of project	Amount Requested	Decision
NT 259	Bedfordshire Police (Luton) Funding no longer required as being met from the community safety budget.			Funded from community safety budget
	Limbury 50+ Group		£1,700	Approved

Resolved: That the report be (Ref: 17) noted.

(ii) That the application under the Area Project Scheme be approved in the sums indicated above.

59 AGENDA PLANNING (REF: 18)

No agenda items were identified for the Committee's next meeting.

(Note : The meeting ended at 9.30 pm).