

**EAST AREA PANEL held at THAXTED DAY CENTRE at 7.30 pm on
1 MARCH 2006**

Present:- Councillor D W Gregory – Chairman.
Councillors C A Cant, C D Down, S Flack, M L Foley,
M A Gayler, E W Hicks, A R Thawley and A M Wattebot.

Also present at the Chairman's invitation:- Councillor V Pedder.

Officers in attendance:- D Burrige, R Chamberlain, J Elsom, H Joy,
D Osborn, R Pridham, M T Purkiss, A Stewart and D Toombs.

Also present:- Representatives from the following Town and Parish
Councils:- Broxted, Great Dunmow and Thaxted.

EP8 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors E Gower, M Miller,
J P Murphy and F E Silver.

EP9 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2006 were received,
confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to the
inclusion in Minute EP4 (Great Dunmow Primary School) that residents had
been threatened.

EP10 BUSINESS ARISING

(i) Minute EP6 – Work Programme

Councillor Thawley said that at the last meeting, he had asked that the
Committee look at a policy for school parking and access to schools and this
was duly noted.

**(ii) Minute EP4 – Great Dunmow Primary School – Housing Land
Eastern Boundary**

Councillor Flack declared an interest in this item as a Member of Essex
County Council.

Lisa Carter, a resident of Woodlands Park presented a petition which had
been signed by 314 residents requesting some form of speed control for
Woodlands Park Drive, Great Dunmow for the safety of children, residents
and school entrance. The petition highlighted problems of speeding vehicles,
near misses and vehicles using the roundabout in the wrong direction. Lisa
Carter also stated that there was a lack of speed restriction signs, a
pedestrian crossing, school signs and the school crossing patrol was located
in the wrong place.

Councillor Flack said that she would try to get Highways officers to attend the next meeting of the Panel so that these issues could be discussed in more detail.

RESOLVED that Essex County Council be asked to look at the possibility of traffic calming measures being introduced.

The Executive Manager (Housing Services) reported that the recommendations at the last meeting had been approved by the Council's Community Committee with the inclusion of a reference requiring the school to close the gate on the eastern boundary of the site directly accessing a strip of housing land and not allow it to be used as an access point to the school building. He said that letters had gone to Essex County Council and the police and replies were still awaited. He had also spoken to the Council's own Legal Section and had been advised that there was no evidence to suggest that the strip of land was a public right of way and it was recommended that, following consultation with residents, it be blocked at each end.

Councillor Cant said that she understood that the path was not safe and considered that there was no alternative to its closure.

RECOMMENDED that, following consultation with residents, the strip of land be closed.

EP11

MINUTES OF THE DUNMOW LOCAL ROAD SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE HELD ON 3 OCTOBER 2005

Councillor Gregory said that the work of the former Road Safety Advisory Committees had now been transferred to the Area Panels.

The Minutes of the meeting of the Dunmow Local Road Safety Advisory Committee held on 3 October 2005 were then approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Councillor Flack said that she noted that there had been no Highway representative at the last meeting the Road Safety Advisory Committee, nor had a representative attended the first meeting of the East Area Panel. She understood that the Highways Department had not been provided with dates of the Area Panel meetings and asked that they be given a copy of the timetable for the forthcoming year.

She said that Essex County Council could provide a subsidy of £1,000 to parish councils for each variable message sign which was installed in their village.

Councillor Cant said that much of the information provided to the former Road Safety Advisory Committees could also be submitted to the Area Panels and she asked that the accident statistics should be submitted on a regular basis. Officers undertook to ask the police to provide these on a quarterly basis.

EP12

WASTE STRATEGY

The Services Officer presented a report on the Waste Strategy for Uttlesford which would address four key aims of improving recycling performance, minimising waste, maximising recycling credits and minimising landfill tax penalties.

Following the presentation, the Services Officer dealt with the following questions. A resident suggested that it would take longer to empty the bins than deal with the current plastic sacks. He also asked if it was possible to carry on home composting and the Services Officer said that this would be encouraged.

Jill Bolvig-Hansen, the Tenant Forum Chair, asked for details of who would pay for the bins, how much they cost and who would be responsible for replacing them. The Services Officer said that if a bin was stolen, it would be replaced free of charge for the first time, but a charge would be made for any subsequent replacements. He said that Uttlesford District Council would be funding the acquisition of bins, but it was looking to the County Council for some assistance. In response to a further question, he said that the preferred method of dealing with food waste was to wrap it in newspaper, but biodegradable bags could be used.

A resident said that there had been some suggestions that on a previous kitchen waste trial the waste was being put in with the normal waste when the refuse vehicles collected this. However, the Services Officer said that this was a misconception and the vehicle had two compartments so that recyclable waste could be kept separate.

In response to a further question concerning the weight of full black plastic boxes, the Services Officer confirmed that these had been chosen, as they were best practice at the time.

A resident asked whether the bins would be different sizes. The Services Officer replied that they would all be the same height, but were of different widths.

Councillor Leeder from Thaxted Parish Council pointed out that when recycled cardboard was spread on farmland, it often lead to complaints from residents.

A resident said that she had been waiting some time for the delivery of two plastic bins which had now been received. However, she was surprised to hear that they would now be replaced by wheeled bins.

Councillor Hicks asked whether carrier bags from major supermarkets were biodegradable. The Services Officer said that these were being examined at the present time and it appeared that some were biodegradable, but this needed to be made clearer to the public. The Executive Manager said that letters had been sent to supermarkets to encourage them to supply biodegradable bin liners and to ensure that they were clearly labelled.

Councillor Flack referred to some properties which would have problems with access as the refuse vehicles could not gain access to them. She also pointed out that whilst the Council would be removing part of its putrescible

waste, the Government would still tax the Council on the basis of 67% and she felt that this was unfair. Councillor Gayler said that this and other issues needed to be taken up with the Government.

EP13

THAXTED DAY CENTRE

The Executive Manager (Housing Services) outlined the problems with the current day centre and said that the need for the Council to carry out major work had been recognised and the Community Committee had agreed to make provision in the estimates for 2006/07. However, no final decision would be made on the project until the East Area Panel had the opportunity to consider the matter.

The Architectural Surveyor then gave a presentation on possible options. He said that the building was in need of repair and modernisation, the flat roof was in a poor condition and the building was badly affected by subsidence. Also, the entrance did not meet the current Disability Discrimination Act requirements. He said that the options were as follows:-

- (i) Refurbish the current building – estimate £150,000.
- (ii) Refurbish current building and extend – estimate £200,000.
- (iii) Rebuild and extend the day centre – estimate £225,000.
- (iv) Do nothing.

He recommended that option (iii) would be the most appropriate scheme to move forward with. He then answered questions concerning the likely contract period and clarified that additional car parking would not be provided as the Margaret Street car park adjoined the site.

The Chairman of the Thaxted Day Centre Management Committee said that he supported option (iii). He said that the current building was in a very poor condition and was at capacity on Tuesdays and Wednesdays each week so there was a need to make additional space available. He said that if option (iii) was chosen, his only concerns would be to ensure that ongoing provision was available during the construction period. It was also suggested that there should be a covered area for disabled buggies. The Architectural Surveyor gave an assurance that ongoing provision would be available during the contract period and it would be possible to incorporate a covered area for buggies. Councillor Leeder said that the Parish Council also supported the rebuild option. A resident said that there was a problem of some people getting to the centre from other parts of the village and catchment area.

Councillor Flack said that option (iii) should be pursued and the maximum amount of space should be made available. She was also given an assurance that this option would enable the subsidence problems to be addressed. Councillor Gayler questioned whether the L-shaped design would be the most appropriate and officers confirmed that this would be looked at in the details stage. Councillor Watebot said that the new build option would enable better foundations to be provided. Councillor Thawley added that the

building should be environmentally friendly and questioned whether two storeys would be more appropriate. Councillor Foley added that this was a golden opportunity for the Council to build a state of the art facility.

The Community Development Manager said that grants under the Community Initiative Fund could be available for some items.

RESOLVED that the East Area Panel support option (iii) to demolish and rebuild a purpose built centre.

EP14 **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT**

The Community Development Manager reported on the current situation regarding grants, the healthy eating and lifestyle programme and the Z bikes (moped loan scheme).

In relation to staffing, he reported that three posts were in the process of being advertised, that of Youth and Arts Officer, Community Development Officer (Drugs and Alcohol) and Diversity Officer.

Councillor Gayler said that he understood only seven applications had been made for the Community Initiative Funding and suggested that it had not been advertised well. It was pointed out that any money not spent would be rolled over to the next year's budget. Councillor Foley asked that a letter be sent to all Town and Parish Clerks advising them of the details of the scheme. Councillor Leeder added that the Essex Association of Local Councils had appointed six members to sit on the Panel.

EP15 **ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA**

It was noted that arrangements were being made for an extraordinary meeting to be held on 26 April 2006 at the Foakes Hall to enable consideration to be given to the Civic Amenity Site in Dunmow and the Woodlands Park traffic problems. The next ordinary meeting would look at highway issues and grants and the following meeting would receive a report on tourism. The Chairman said that he was looking at the possibility of all parish representatives giving a two-minute presentation on why people should visit their village.

EP16 **GENERAL ISSUES**

The Chairman encouraged residents to fill in BAA questionnaires, but not in the skewed way in which the questions had been framed. He said that the next issue of Uttlesford Life would include an article on the airport and a tear off slip would also enable residents to make their views known to BAA. He suggested that an item could go on the future agendas regarding progress with the airport.

The meeting ended at 9.40 pm. Page 5