

**EAST AREA PANEL held at GREAT DUNMOW DAY CENTRE GREAT DUNMOW at 7.00 pm on 15 OCTOBER 2007**

Present:- Councillor M A Gayler – Chairman.  
Councillors S Barker, E Bellingham-Smith, C A Cant, R Clover,  
C D Down, E Gower, M J Miller, C Smith and A M Wattebot.

Officers in attendance:- G Bradley, S Hayden, J Mitchell, M T Purkiss and  
P J Snow.

Also present:- D Forkin – West Essex Highways Manager, Essex  
County Council.

Parish Council and public representatives:- Audrey Miller, Yvonne Crome,  
David Crome, Bridget Fry, Sue Hawkins, R Leeder, J Oakshott,  
P Leeder, T Frostick, A Thawley, J Oliveira, Linda White,  
V Freeman, T Hedley and J Freeman.

**EP22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M L Foley, E W Hicks  
and R Sherer.

**EP23 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2007 were received, confirmed  
and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**EP24 MATTERS ARISING**

**(i) Minute EP17 – West Essex Primary Care Trust**

Members asked that, having regard to housing growth in the area, the West  
Essex Primary Care Trust should be urged to review the provision of local  
health.

**(ii) Minute EP18 – Local Development Framework**

The Director of Development advised the Panel of progress with the Local  
Development Framework Core Strategy. It was noted that the matter would  
now be reconsidered by the Council's Environment Committee at its meeting  
on 30 October 2007.

Local residents said that health impact studies should be carried out for any  
large scale developments and there was a need to ensure that infrastructure  
was provided and that employment options were pursued.

**HIGHWAYS ISSUES**

The Chairman introduced David Forkin, the Highways Manager for the West Essex Area.

The Chairman then asked representatives from each of the wards to comment on any highway issues in their areas.

The parish representative from High Easter/White Roding said that they had been given parish visit dates in 2008 and it was not acceptable that there had been no visits during the current year.

Councillor Barker said that despite grants being made available some time ago for variable speed signs, there were still no signs in place. She said that the maintenance of footpaths along the B184 was unacceptable and there needed to be planned ongoing maintenance. She also referred to the importance of the accident reduction scheme towards Great Canfield. Mr Forkin said that the variable speed signs had been purchased and delivery of the poles was awaited. He agreed to look at the issues regarding footways and accident reduction measures.

In answer to a further question from Councillor Gayler, Mr Forkin said that the downgrading of the A130 through Barnston needed the approval of the Secretary of State.

A resident said that the footpaths from High Roding to Leaden Roding needed clearance and was concerned that there was still no progress with the traffic calming scheme in High Roding.

Councillor Gayler referred to the delay with carrying out improvements to the junction at Hoblongs. Mr Forkin said that work could only take place once the finance came on-stream. Councillor Cant questioned whether the development of the police station and the Travel Lodge should have progressed without the junction improvements being in place. In conclusion Councillor Gayler asked that the Highways Department progressed the planning design and provided a costed plan in advance of the finance being made available.

In response to a question from Councillor Clover concerning the new waiting restrictions in Dunmow, Mr Forkin said that enforcement would be the responsibility of Uttlesford District Council.

The parish representative from Little Bardfield complained that the Highways Department had not replied to phone calls or e-mails. She had written a letter of complaint, but still no response had been received. She had also written to the Highways Department concerning the provision of signs to Hawkspur Green and the condition of the road, but again, no reply had been received. Mr Forkin apologised for this and said that he would investigate these matters.

A representative from Thaxted said that projects were outstanding on the traffic calming in Bardfield Road, bus stop markings and the white lines in Town Street. Mr Forkin said that the traffic calming project could be started shortly and he would look at the other issues raised.

A resident said that the 40mph speed limit at Duton Hill needed to be extended to the junction with the road to Little Cambridge or a concealed entrance sign provided and she also asked that the painted signs on the road at Duton Hill be repainted.

A resident suggested that the County Council were using contractors who were not up to the job and road resurfacing was unacceptable. Reference was also made to the disposal of road chippings. It was also pointed out that the yellow lines in Thaxted needed replacing.

A representative from Little Dunmow said that the road from the village to Oakwood Park still had no footway and this was extremely dangerous. It was also pointed out that yellow lines had been painted outside the Felsted Post Office, but these had recently been tarmaced over. A traffic survey had also been undertaken in Little Dunmow, but the results were still awaited.

Councillor Bellingham-Smith said that the sign for a dangerous bend at Felsted had been placed in the middle of the pavement and then had to be moved but had still not been replaced. A representative from the parish council said that despite a meeting in January concerning Mill Road, no action had yet been taken. It was suggested that section 106 monies needed to be progressed and questions were raised concerning progress with the Quiet Lanes project. The representative also referred to the problem of cars parking on footpaths. Mr Forkin said that the Quiet Lanes project should be progressed during this financial year and he would raise the issue of cars parking on the footpaths with the police.

The representative from Broxsted said that there had been a deterioration in the service provided by highways and the complete lack of communication with parishes was a major problem. Mr Forkin said that the situation was unacceptable and he would personally investigate the allegations of non response.

A resident of Lindsell said that the speed limit signs had now been erected and the service from the Highways Department was generally good. The only problem they had in the village was that after the local farmers cut the special verges, the highway contractors then cut them again at an inappropriate time and he asked if this could be stopped.

Councillor Barker referred to work which had been carried out by May Gurney contractors in relation to the measured schedule and suggested that a dialogue with parish clerks would have saved a great deal of this work having to be undertaken. Councillor Cant said that communication was poor and issues regarding hedge cutting in Stebbing had not been addressed. She said that the speed limit in Brick Kiln Lane to The Downs was still awaiting progress.

In conclusion, the Chairman asked Mr Forkin to report back to the Panel on the issues which had been raised and to set out what was proposed in the current programme.

**REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES**

Councillor Gayler declared a personal interest in this item, insofar as it related to the United Reform Church.

The Electoral Services Officer said that the Council was required to complete a review of its polling districts and polling places within 12 months of the date on which section 16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006 came into force and every four years thereafter. The relevant date for completion of the review was the end of 2007. It was intended that the entire scheme would be submitted to the Finance and Administration Committee for approval on 15 November 2007.

The report of the Electoral Services Officer set out details of the consultation process and it was noted that the number of representations received had been disappointing.

It was also noted that, as part of the 2006 review, arrangements had been made for a survey to be carried out by the Essex Disabled Peoples Association to assess the buildings currently used and the issues which had been raised had been noted.

The Panel then discussed the proposed scheme of polling districts and places insofar as it applied to wards and parishes within the East Area Panel boundaries.

It was proposed to divide the existing polling district of Little Dunmow into two separate polling districts of Flitch Green and Little Dunmow based on the areas of the proposed new parish of Flitch Green and the revised parish of Little Dunmow.

It was noted that a proposal to create a new parish of Flitch Green was submitted to the Secretary of State in June 2007 and it was not expected that the new parish would come into effect until either 2008 or at such later time as was agreed.

It was proposed that the polling district boundaries coincided exactly with that of the proposed new parish. Until such time as the parish was created by Order, it would be necessary to define the boundary as follows:

Flitch Green – ‘The northern boundary to run along the edge of Oakwood Park immediately to the south of Gypsy Lane. The north-eastern boundary would follow the centre of Station Road to the point where it is crossed by Stebbing Brook; it would then follow the line of the Brook along the south-eastern boundary (coinciding, at this point, with the common boundary between Uttlesford and Chelmsford Borough). The western boundary would then follow first the nature reserve boundary, and then the development limits of Oakwood Park until it joined with the boundary at the north-western point’.

The revised Little Dunmow polling district would then consist of ‘that part of the existing parish of Little Dunmow not included in the Flitch Green polling district’.

The Panel then discussed the designation of a polling place for the new polling district of Flitch Green and, on balance, felt that although the Flitch Green School may prove the most suitable polling venue the option to designate the whole polling district as the polling district for Flitch Green, together with an area extending one mile beyond the polling district boundary, was preferable. It was noted that this decision could be reviewed either at the next scheduled review or at such time as an interim review became necessary.

It was further proposed that the Flitch of Bacon Public House continue to be designated as the polling place for Little Dunmow.

A resident questioned whether the Brook formed the common boundary between Uttlesford and Chelmsford Borough Council and the Electoral Services Officers said he would investigate this matter further.

RESOLVED that the Panel recommend the adoption of the revised polling district arrangements set out above, together with the proposed boundary definitions and the proposed polling places specified in this Minute.

The Panel then discussed the proposed arrangements for Great Dunmow North and Great Dunmow South. The report suggested that consideration should be given to making revised arrangements for both wards and, on balance, officers believed that the best option was to divide both existing wards into two separate polling districts.

It was stated that the need to divide the North ward was based on the different needs of two distinct residential areas at Woodlands Park and the north part of the town of Great Dunmow, including Church End. The argument to create two polling districts in the south ward was based firmly on the large and growing size of the electorate there and the need to make convenient arrangements for all electors.

The Electoral Services Officer put forward a proposal to divide the wards and suggested that the Great Dunmow Primary School, Dourdan Pavilion, United Reform Church and E T Foakes Memorial Hall should be designated as polling stations.

In response to a question from Councillor Gayler, the Electoral Services Officer explained the access arrangements at the Primary School. A resident suggested that there could be child protection issues in screening off part of the school hall. The Electoral Services Officer said that if the proposals were adopted all residents would be notified and Councillor Barker suggested that this should be done through Uttlesford Life rather than by individual letters.

Councillor Smith suggested that the proposed split between the Dunmow south-east and south-west polling districts was far from ideal and Councillor Gayler suggested that the matter should be given further consideration by the Great Dunmow Town Council.

It was therefore

RESOLVED that the Panel recommend that, subject to the views of Great Dunmow Town Council, the entire scheme covering the East Panel area be adopted with effect from the date of publication of the revised register on 30 November 2007 and that the Electoral Services Officer be authorised to prepare a suitable statement of reasons for decisions made as part of the review.

EP27

### **BELLROPE MEADOW THAXTED**

At the last meeting it had been agreed that the District would prepare, with the assistance of Thaxted Parish Council, a full and comprehensive report on the drainage system at Thaxted to be forwarded to Anglian Water. It was reported that the Parish Council had provided a dossier of information which had enabled the Council's engineer to go to Anglian Water and had asked that computer modelling should be undertaken to ascertain the extent of the problem.

In response to concerns raised by a resident, the Director of Development confirmed that any proposals to change the live/work units to entirely residential would be resisted strongly.

It was agreed that a further report would be submitted to the next meeting on the drainage issue.

EP28

### **WOODLANDS AND OAKWOOD PARKS**

The Director of Development gave an update on the Woodlands and Oakwood Parks developments. In relation to Woodlands Park, he stated that the traffic calming measures were now in place and negotiations were continuing regarding the open space and the replacement tree planting would be carried out in the autumn. In response to a question from Councillor Gayler, he said he would investigate the issue of a gated access and temporary fencing adjoining the open space area.

With regard to Oakwood Park, he said that the lack of the provision of leisure facilities was being pursued. He added that three planning applications were currently under consideration including that for the provision of the community centre. A proposal had also been put forward for an interim play area, but this was not considered to be suitable. The Director also referred to the High Court challenge.

A representative of the Parish Council said that the village hall design and construction was not acceptable to the Parish Council or the Residents Association and the Parish Council would not take ownership of it. Another resident said that the play area was not acceptable as it was too near the main road and an electricity sub-station and caused problems to residents. She suggested that the Council had failed to consult the original master plan. Another resident also suggested that it was important to ensure that in future

developments, infrastructure should be provided before the housing was completed.

In relation to the misuse of the play area, the Council's Leisure and Community Development Manager said that the Anti Social Behaviour Officer and the Community Sports Outreach Worker were working with young people in the area to provide access to activities at the Great Dunmow Leisure Centre.

EP29

#### **STANSTED AIRPORT UPDATE**

The Director of Development reported that the Public Inquiry would be completed this week and a decision was expected by March 2008. He understood that the planning application for the second runway was likely to be submitted in February 2008. He added that the G2 Inquiry was likely to be running at the same time as the Local Development Framework Inquiry and would be subject to the new rules regarding parallel hearings and these issues would create resource problems for the Council. He concluded that there was a re-consultation exercise on surface access and the Council would be responding shortly.

EP30

#### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT**

The Panel received a report which outlined related community development activities and schemes.

The meeting ended at 9.25 pm.