

EAST AREA PANEL held at THE GREAT DUNMOW DAY CENTRE at 7.00pm on 26 FEBRUARY 2008

Present:- Councillor M A Gayler – Chairman.
Councillors E Bellingham-Smith, C A Cant, R Clover, C D Down, M L Foley, E Gower, E W Hicks, R Sherer and A M Wattebot.

Officers in attendance:- G Bradley (Leisure and Community Development Manager) M Cox (Committee Officer), J Dear (Emergency Planning Officer), S Hayden (Community Development Officer) and J Mitchell (Director of Development).

Parish Council and public representatives:- Rachel Leader (Lindsell), John Oakshatt (Lindsell), Philip Leader (Thaxted Parish Council), Eileen Walsh (Thaxted Parish Council) Alan Thawley (Felsted Parish Council), J Oliveira (Broxted Parish Council) Roy Howland and David Howland,

EP40 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Barker and S Smith.

EP41 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2008 were received, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

EP42 BUSINESS ARISING

i) Minute EP35 – Replacement of Thaxted Day Centre

Councillor Foley asked for a progress report for the next meeting of the Panel.

ii) Minute EP36 – Local Development Framework – Core Strategy Consultation.

The Director of Development said that the consultation period had now closed and officers were still going through the responses. There had been many objections received as well as alternative proposals for new developments which would require comparative work. The developers that had put forward proposals for settlements at Elsenham, Stebbing and Eastern Park had made bids to the Government to be considered as eco settlements and the outcome of this was expected soon. The final recommendations for the Core Strategy were not expected until at least September and possibly into the New Year. A position statement would be reported to the Environment Committee on 11 March.

v) Minute EP37 - Eastern Sector Update

Page 1
It was reported that the light limiters had been installed and the lights in the car park now went off at 10pm. Additional funding had been agreed by ECC

for the pedestrianisation scheme and it was working with the Dunmow Town Strategy Group on the preferred design.

vi) Minute EP38 – Stansted Airport Update

The G2 application had not yet been received but was expected before the end of the financial year. It would be a huge complex proposal comprising a number of applications and many supporting documents. Processing the applications would be a significant task and BAA had agreed to contribute towards these costs.

In relation to the recent public inquiry, the Inspectors report had been completed and submitted to the Secretary of State for final decision but it was not clear how long it would be before a decision was announced. Also, BAA had submitted further evidence on air quality, and if this was accepted, the process would be delayed while further responses were considered.

EP43

EMERGENCY PLANNING – FLOODING AND EVACUATION

The Council's Emergency Planning Officer, gave a presentation on the District Council's role in the event of flooding and evacuation. He explained that all agencies produced their own plans which tied together into an overall strategy. The District Council's plans dealt mainly with the welfare of residents following an emergency. He explained the role of the parish councils' and gave out key emergency contact numbers.

Councillor Gayler asked if the Council had a role to play in putting in place preventative initiatives for flooding. He was informed that a flood fayre had been held to publicise flood defences, which had been attended by relevant agencies and members of public. The Council was also a member of a Resilience Forum that was chaired by the Environment Agency and attended by Essex County Council and looked at issues associated with flooding.

Alan Thawley said that the most likely significant emergency in the district would be an aircraft crash in the vicinity of Stansted Airport and cited the confusion that had followed the Korean aircraft crash. The emergency planning officer said that many lessons had been learnt from that incident. It had occurred before the Civil Contingency Act and much tighter plans were now in place.

Councillor Cant said that Stebbing Parish Council had nearly completed its emergency plan. She asked about the insurance situation for people that might be helping with the emergency response, particularly if they were operating machinery. Jason Dear thought that this would be covered by the District Council's insurance but would clarify the situation.

Members thanked the Emergency Planning Officer for his presentation and asked that a copy be circulated to parish council's for information.

EP44

THAXTED FLOODING UPDATE

Further to the last meeting, the Council's Engineer had produced a map of the sewers in Thaxted and marked those that were within the ownership of Anglia Water and those that were the responsibility of local land owners.

Mr Leeder asked for a date when the sewer from Bellrope Meadow would be connected to the mains. The Chairman replied that this would be clarified with the Engineer but it was understood that Anglia Water considered there to be adequate provision in the holding tanks until the connection could be made. Members of the parish council said that they kept being assured that everything was ok but were concerned about who would take responsibility if anything went wrong and there was another flooding incident.

EP45

HIGHWAY ISSUES

The Panel received a written update from the Area Highway Manager on the progress of highway schemes in the East Panel area. The following were outstanding matters to be referred back to the Area Office.

- It was noted that Angel Lane, Great Dunmow was in a poor condition.
- There was concern that the Hoblong Junction improvement scheme had not yet been progressed. The improvements were vital as this was a very dangerous and congested junction. Section 106 contributions from the Travelodge should be pursued. Also, a bid could be made for it to be put in the Essex programme as a congestion busting scheme.
- Station Road Felsted –speed limit - local members asked to be consulted on the positioning of the signs
- Bardfield Road Thaxted – Councillor Foley was concerned at the delay in implementing this scheme. .The design had been completed and had been passed to the contractor, a start date was awaited.
- Little Bardfield – Councillor Wattebot said that the parish council had asked for the 40mph speed limit to be extended on the approaches to the village, to consider appropriate surfacing for frost holes and for signs to be put up at Hawkspur Green.

The Chairman said that he welcomed the positive initiatives from County Highways to improve relationships between the council and the local community. However, there needed to be more constructive discussion with the Area Panel and he hoped that someone from the highway office would be able to attend the next meeting.

EP46

AREA PANELS – FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS

The Leisure and Community Development Manager said that officers had undertaken an initial review of the Area Panels as they had now been in place for two years. There were certain issues that kept coming up at the meetings which often involved input from other organisations. It was hoped that future

meetings would have more of a multi agency approach with the involvement of the Police, Highways and the Health Authority and other appropriate agencies. The Panel welcomed this idea but said that its success would be determined by the extent to which the external agencies were prepared to be involved.

EP47

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT

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

The meeting ended at 8.30pm.