

Uttlesford Locality Board: Minutes

Uttlesford District Council, 14 December 2015

- Attendees: Cllr Susan Barker (UDC/ECC), Cllr Kevin Bentley (ECC), Cllr Ray Gooding (ECC), Cllr John Lodge (UDC/ECC), Cllr Howard Rolfe - (UDC) - chair, Cllr Lesley Wells (UDC), Joe Chell (ECC), Rebecca Dobson (UDC), Peter Fairley (ECC), Roger Harborough (UDC), Joel John (ECC), Marcus Roberts (ECC), Andrew Taylor (UDC) and Adrian Webb (UDC).
- Apologies: Cllr Simon Howell (UDC) and Cllr Julie Redfern (UDC).
- 1. Welcome and introductions**

Cllr Rolfe welcomed all present.
 - 2. Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2016 were agreed.
 - 3. Budget issues including CSR/Autumn Statement**

Peter Fairley (PF) gave a presentation on the Spending Review and Autumn Statement 2015, covering five-year Comprehensive Spending Review of the Chancellor, its goals, key messages for local government and conclusions relating to district authorities. *(For details see slide pack.)*

Adrian Webb (UDC) said the provisions affecting the New Homes Bonus were of concern to the District Council as they would have a significant impact. Councillors commented the headline pressures for ECC were for social care and the 2% cap, and the impact of the Living Wage which would affect payment of salaries to care workers. The 2% increase in council tax income would not make up for the impact.

Cllr Rolfe said more information was needed on the business rate retention proposals to assess the impact on Uttlesford's income and the additional responsibilities that councils were expected to take on.

Concern was expressed that there was a gap in responsibilities in running schools.
 - 4. Economic Development including: Greater Essex Independent Economic Commission**

Cllr Bentley gave a verbal update on the Greater Essex Independent Economic Commission. A sub-group had been established composed of leaders and chief executives, to look at the true worth of the area. This sub group would be chaired by Andrew Sentance. The economic plan for Essex was now a deeper initiative, with the aim to increase the value of the area from £33bn to £60bn. A call for witnesses would be issued soon, and local businesses would be involved. Independent consultants were conducting the work and the two universities were contributing.

Cllr Rolfe said it was right there should be independent scrutiny.

Andrew Taylor (AT) asked how this body would link to the other growth commission which had been established by the LSCC.

Cllr Bentley said the LSCC review was dominated by transportation. The groups were working closely together, and both LEPs (SELEP and GCGP LEP) would have input.

Broadband

Cllr Bentley gave a verbal update on a meeting regarding Superfast Essex with UDC officers and the portfolio lead. The programme was ahead of schedule due to good weather. Current coverage on the existing package was 85%, with the aim for 95% coverage subject to some pockets of less coverage. Phase 1 should be completed by 2016, and Phase 2 by 2019.

Adrian Webb (AW) said UDC was waiting for BDUK to advise on whether a voucher scheme for wifi was possible.

Councillors noted there would be likely to be an issue with state aid, and that other authorities (Braintree, Epping Forest and Tendring District Councils) had made capital contributions to the Superfast Essex programme which ECC had then match funded.

Cllr Barker said for Uttlesford this would only increase coverage by 1%.

Cllr Bentley said there were opportunities as technology could change, and he advised Uttlesford should reconsider Superfast broadband. Communication with parishes showed there were often difficulties where they entered deals with private companies.

Cllr Rolfe said more details would be required before concerning the satellite voucher scheme.

Actions: UDC to continue to assess participation in Superfast Essex and to assess how the participating authorities had benefitted (Braintree DC, Epping Forest DC and Tendring DC); ECC to supply map of broadband coverage within Uttlesford.

5. School capacity and projections for Uttlesford and Local Planning

Joe Chell (JC) gave a presentation on school places capacity and projections for Uttlesford, first addressing the position relating to primary schools. *(See slide pack for further details.)*

Cllr Lodge expressed concern that there were insufficient primary school places in Saffron Walden.

Councillors noted planning was in place for necessary expansion in school places, based on predicted requirements. It was not advisable to provide too many surplus places at schools in advance, as the places would fill from out of catchment applications, and having too many surplus places had adverse financial implications for schools.

Councillors discussed the situation where there were ongoing travel costs where children could not initially obtain places in a village schools. However, it was not possible to force parents to change their child's school.

Councillors noted a new school would be planned for Takeley, probably on the Roseacres side of the village.

JC gave details of school capacity projections for secondary schools. Cllr Lodge questioned the reason for combining information on Saffron Walden and Newport.

Cllr Gooding said the issue was that the admissions criteria did not apply until the intake number was reached.

JC said the projections were based on geography and overlapping planned admissions areas.

Action: the information on Saffron Walden County High School and Joyce Frankland Academy would be set out separately in future reports.

Cllr Lodge said the SWCHS' sibling policy led to problems, and that people would prefer to see a community-oriented policy. Cllr Gooding said all four secondary schools were academies and set their own admissions criteria. Furthermore, the Government suggested the sibling criteria should take priority.

AT enquired about analysis of data on out of catchment sibling applications.

JC explained the number of out of catchment siblings had been dropping; there was a misconception in village schools that they were feeder schools for the secondary schools in the larger settlements, but instead what might be needed were village secondary schools. Joyce Frankland's catchment area would expand to cover village schools, and it did not have a sibling policy. In conclusion, JC said there was schools place capacity in Uttlesford.

Cllr Rolfe said school choice was sometimes due to ECC transport to school policy.

Cllr Gooding said evidence was that the policy made no difference to the schools people chose to send children to.

There was discussion of the disincentive for creating cycle paths where these then meant free transport would not be provided for school children.

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| 6. Independent Living | Councillors agreed to omit this item as as a report on the issue has been received by Cllr Barker during the course of the day. |
| 7. Health and Wellbeing
Essex JSNA and JHWS Review | Marcus Roberts (MR) gave a presentation on the JSNA and Health and Wellbeing Strategy, providing a summary of the Strategy, its areas of focus, the priorities for 2014-15 and those for 2015-16, and JSNA emerging issues relating to Uttlesford. <i>(For further details see slide pack.)</i> |

In the context of Uttlesford, when the original Health and Wellbeing Strategy was projected, Uttlesford had very good indices for health and wellbeing, but more recent data showed it had the second highest rate of inactive children and the highest rate of increasing and higher risk drinking for Essex, and the second highest number of serious road injuries and deaths.

Discussion centred on how to address the issues relevant to Uttlesford. Councillors considered the topic of inactivity in children should be looked at in greater depth. Cllr Gooding advised that Active Essex data showed Uttlesford did not have a great number of accessible activities.

Cllr Rolfe suggested looking at available models on how to address these factors, possibly through a campaign.

Cllr Bentley said schools had a role to play, and that delivering the message without preaching was important.

Action: To invite Clare Morris (WECCG) to the next meeting to consider how to promote increased activity amongst children. Cllr Gooding to invite Mike Gogarty.

Action: To consider when next to run a road safety campaign.

8. Feedback from key meetings

Cllr Bentley gave a verbal update on the A120 transport scheme, into which the Department for Transport was putting money. The aim was to achieve better connectivity across East/West. ECC rather than Highways had been asked to lead the work; there were two groups, one which dealt with the specific route, and the other addressing economic growth. Much consultation needed to be carried out with parish councils.

Action: To note the importance of the A120 corridor.

Action: Regarding West Essex transport projects, Cllr Rolfe to invite Cllr Bentley to a meeting of West Essex Chief Executives and Leaders.

PF said the Health and Wellbeing Board had agreed to write to NHS England to ensure that West Essex would not be disadvantaged by its exclusion from the success regime by missing out on funding and to ensure its inclusion in integration initiatives

Cllr Barker said it was proving difficult to identify vulnerable children who might particularly benefit from Children's Centres, as there had been a problem with data protection in using birth registrations. She hoped a solution could be found.

Cllr Bentley said the second newsletter on devolution would be issued by 18 December.

9. Communications – including work

PF explained that this item was a standing item to enable any additional matters not on the agenda to be raised.

with parishes

Cllr Bentley suggested the meetings of the Uttlesford Locality Board be conducted in public, and that the Uttlesford Association of Local Councils be invited.

Action: To consider holding future meetings of the Locality Board in public and to invite representatives of the UALC.

Cllr Barker asked an item to promote entitlement to benefits for older persons where a household member was moving into residential care.

Action: Cllr Barker to approach Andy Allsopp regarding inclusion of an item on benefits in a forthcoming newsletter.

10. Agenda for next meeting

Agenda for next meeting:

The theme to be Health and Wellbeing, including Sport

Action: invite Active Essex, Mike Overton and Clare Morris.

The next meeting to be held at UDC offices on 7 March 2016 at 16:00 – 18:00, chaired by Cllr Gooding.