

SOUTH EAST AREA COMMITTEE

MINUTES

WEDNESDAY 21ST NOVEMBER 2018

**RED ARENA, IPSWICH ACADEMY, BRAZIERS WOOD
ROAD, IPSWICH IP3 0SP**

7.00 PM

Present: Gainsborough Ward Councillors: S Connelly, M Cook and S Handley
Holywells Ward Councillors: E Harsant and B Studd
Priory Heath Ward Councillors: S Barber, B Knowles and D Maguire

Suffolk County Council Councillors: M Gaylard

There were 40 members of the public in attendance.

46. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Parry and SCC Councillor Quinton.

47. Unconfirmed Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Resolved:

that the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2018 be signed as a true record.

48. To Confirm or Vary the Order of Business

It was proposed that Agenda Item 10 (SEAC/18/17 – Policing Update) be considered prior to Agenda Item 9 (Responses to Public Questions and Open Discussions on Local Issues).

Resolved:

that subject to Agenda Item 10 being considered before Agenda Item 9, the Order of Business be confirmed as printed on the Agenda.

49. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Knowles, being involved with another local Bowls Club, declared an interest in Agenda Item 15 (report SEAC/18/22) and left the room during consideration of this item.

50. To Confirm the Venues of Future Meetings

Resolved:

That the meetings and venues be confirmed as follows:

- **Wednesday 16 January 2019, 7pm – Alan Road Methodist Church**
- **Wednesday 13 March 2019, 7pm – Priory Heath Ward.**

51. Chair's Update on Actions From Previous Meetings

51.1 The Chair reported that a handout was available at the meeting with updates on and responses to actions raised at previous meetings.

52. Ipswich Academy Update

52.1 The Principal of Ipswich Academy, Helen Winn, explained that the school had been making good progress, with progress in Maths, English and Science better than the national average. Ms Winn was also pleased to report that those with higher prior attainment were now also making good progress.

52.2 The Principal reported that the school had benefitted from £200,000 of additional funding through the Suffolk Public Sector Leaders' fund which had been very useful in improving social mobility.

52.3 The Manager of the Gainsborough Community Library commented that Ipswich Academy and the Library had previously had a good relationship and suggested that this be re-established. The Principal agreed to pass on the appropriate contact details.

52.4 The Chair and a number of residents congratulated Ms Winn, and the staff and students at Ipswich Academy for the impressive progress which had been made.

53. Changes to First Buses Routes 60, 61, 75, 76, 77 and X7

53.1 The Network Manager, First Eastern Counties Buses, Iain Rankine, explained that the changes to bus routes in the area were part of a wider review. This review had been held in the context of a challenging operating environment for bus companies, with vastly reduced subsidies from County Councils and increasing traffic and costs.

53.2 The Network Manager explained that new ticket machines allowed the company to see accurate information about where passengers boarded buses

- and the number of passengers using the services on Mildmay Road, Boyton Road, Cobham Road and Lindbergh Road were very low. Changes to routes had been designed to affect the lowest number of people and make the services as sustainable as possible. Mr Rankine said that he understood that the changes would make a difference to people's lives and that it was not a decision which had been taken lightly but that the service had to be financially viable.
- 53.3 A resident asked whether any consultation had taken place. The Network Manager said that residents had not been consulted.
- 53.4 A resident asked whether journeys made with a bus pass were counted by the company's new ticket machines. The Network Manager confirmed that these journeys were included in the figures considered.
- 53.5 A number of local residents gave examples of the impacts which the changes to the services would have, with a number of people raising the particular issues which would be faced by disabled people.
- 53.6 Councillor M Cook noted that Suffolk County Council had spent significant amounts of money on the Travel Ipswich project and junction improvements and asked whether this had helped with the traffic issues faced by the bus company. The Network Manager said that the traffic situation continued to be very difficult due to ever increasing numbers of cars, and that at best the works done by Suffolk County Council had prevented traffic from getting worse.
- 53.7 Councillor M Cook asked whether First Eastern Counties Buses had raised the changes to the routes with Suffolk County Council, and whether discussions about subsidy or further road improvements had been held. The Network Manager explained that Suffolk County Council would not, from his experience, have been willing to subsidise the routes to allow them to remain the same. Mr Rankine confirmed that Suffolk County Council had been told of the changes to the routes as part of the regulated process for such service alterations.
- 53.8 A resident asked whether Ipswich Borough Council might be able to subsidise a bus route. Councillor P Smart explained that there were restrictions on what Ipswich Borough Council could subsidise, noting that much of the routes affected by these change ran outside of the borough boundary. Councillor Smart added that in any case a tender process would need to be followed before the Council could subsidise a route, and that whilst Suffolk County Council had been informed of the changes in early September, the Borough Council had not been notified until much later and so had not had time to try to make any alternative arrangements.
- 53.9 Councillor P Smart reported that Ipswich Borough Council had contacted Suffolk County Council regarding the lack of buses on a Sunday and had offered to work with them on mitigating this, but as yet had not received a reply.
- 53.10 A resident noted that only a short time before these changes had been made a new Bus Shelter had been installed in Lindbergh Road. Councillor P Smart

explained that bus shelter locations were agreed by Ipswich Borough Council and that when the shelter was installed, the Borough Council had not been informed of the proposed changes, although it was likely that Suffolk County Council had been.

53.11 Councillor Knowles commented that the system for providing public transport had broken down but that this was not the fault of the local authorities or even First Eastern Counties buses, noting that the issue was a national one. Councillor Knowles noted that many residents had lost a vital service as a result of the changes and asked that First Eastern Counties review whether the impact of the changes turned out to be what they had expected and then consider whether the decision should also be reviewed. The Network Manager confirmed that the passenger numbers would be monitored and agreed to work with other parties to see if anything could be done to help improve the services for those residents impacted by the changes.

53.12 A local resident presented the Network Manager with a petition containing 647 signatures, opposing the changes to the routes.

Resolved:

- a) that the Council write to Suffolk County Council regarding the changes to the bus routes.
- b) that the relevant Portfolio Holder, Councillor P Smart, be asked to work with Suffolk County Council with the aim of reinstating route 4 on a Sunday.

54. Responses to Public Questions and Open Discussion on Local Issues

54.1 A resident asked whether the results of the Speed Survey carried out on Benacre Road were available. The Chair agreed to raise this with SCC Councillor Clements.

54.2 A resident asked whether the proposed cycling centre near to Bluebird Lodge would be developed. Councillor Barber explained that the current local plan allocated the site for a sports park, but that there had been no firm proposal to develop a cycling centre in the 20 years that the site had been available for that development. Councillor Barber explained that the Local Plan was currently being reviewed and that members of the public would be able to comment on that review early in the New Year.

55. SEAC/18/17 Policing Update

55.1 PC Gareth Norwood explained that Suffolk Constabulary was currently undergoing a restructuring. The new area team which covered East Ipswich now had officers in all of the posts in its structure, although some of these officers were new to the area and so were still becoming familiar with it.

- 55.2 PC Norwood reported that Operation Luna, which aimed to protect residents from anti-social behaviour at Halloween had been successful, with fewer incidents than in 2018/19. Work to tackle drug dealing was going well and it was hoped that the community would soon see the benefits of this work.
- 55.3 A resident thanked Suffolk Constabulary for having introduced a patrol on Ravenswood at school drop-off and collection times and asked how long this was likely to continue. PC Norwood explained that the new policing structure included dedicated schools officers who would be able to prioritise such visits, but that it was unlikely that these would be able to be a permanent feature.
- 55.4 A resident noted that drug dealing in some areas of the Ravenswood Estate was very conspicuous. PC Norwood said that such offences were dealt with on a priority basis based on the class of drugs being supplied, and so some offences might not be tackled as quickly as others.
- 55.5 A resident asked whether the Police were able to support Neighbourhood Watch Schemes. PC Norwood said that whilst Neighbourhood Watch Schemes were valuable to the Police and communities, Suffolk Constabulary did not have the resources to support these as they had in the past.
- 55.6 Councillor Cook referred to the statistics included in the agenda and asked why the Crime Rate in Ipswich was so much higher than in 'Similar Areas'. PC Norwood explained that this could be as a result of regional recording differences, but could also mean that there was actually a higher crime rate in Ipswich. PC Norwood said that all of the work the Police did was to reduce the level and impact of crime.
- 55.7 Councillor Harsant explained that there had been an issue with burglary on the Rivers Estate, especially break ins into Garden Sheds, and asked that the Police try to address this. PC Norwood explained that 3 prolific burglars had been released and committed many of the crimes Councillor Harsant had referred to; PC Norwood confirmed that these offenders had now been caught again and were being dealt with.
- 55.8 A resident asked who was responsible for parking enforcement. PC Norwood explained that in most cases Ipswich Borough Council was responsible, however, if a vehicle was obstructing the road to the extent that vehicles could not pass it then the Police could deal with it.
- 55.9 A resident was concerned that the speed indicator devices used on Alan Road were not deployed at peak times. PC Norwood agreed to report this concern to relevant officers.
- 55.10 A resident was concerned that they had seen torchlights in Holywells Park. PC Norwood confirmed that Police Officers had carried out night time patrols of the park, using torches.
- 55.11 A resident noted that the Police website had not been updated to reflect the new structure. PC Norwood agreed to raise this with relevant officers.

56. SEAC/18/18 Asset of Community Value Nomination - Land Known as White Elm Woodland, Mitre Way, Ipswich

- 56.1 The Acting Operations Manager - Legal Services, Clare Dawson-Dulieu, explained that parks officers had visited the site and commented that access to the site was difficult, apart from for some neighbours who could access it through their gardens. Ms Dawson-Dulieu also noted that the Woodland, as drawn in the application, also covered land which was part of back gardens, which were exempt from listing.
- 56.2 Councillor Harsant explained that she supported the application for listing the site. Councillor Harsant added that it would be good if the Council could purchase the woodland to ensure community access.
- 56.3 Councillor Barber explained that Councillor Parry had submitted a letter giving her support for the application. This letter would be passed to the Head of People and Governance, who would be making the final decision on the issue.
- 56.4 Councillor Studd said that he agreed that the site ought to be listed.
- 56.5 SCC Councillor Gaylard explained that there was a Tree Preservation Order which covered the site, and that it was also listed in the local plan. The woodland was, in her opinion, part of a wider network which supported wildlife in Ipswich. SCC Councillor Gaylard confirmed that she supported the application for listing.
- 56.6 A local resident, representing White Elm Woodland Community Interest Company (CIC), which had submitted the Asset of Community Value Application, explained that they owned a small part of the woodland and felt that it was an asset of community value. She explained that through local research she had uncovered an extensive history of community use. The resident explained that access had always been very open as the site could be easily entered from various routes including The Beeches, White Elm Street, Mitre Way as well as neighbours back gardens. Examples of community use included:
- the pupils of Cavendish Street boy's school swimming in the Victorian swimming pool, with the permission of the owners;
 - residents fishing in the former swimming pool;
 - nature trails and space to play for children.
- 56.7 The resident noted that 86 of the 91 objections to the main owners' recent planning application lived in the streets around the woodland and that their objections made clear what it meant to them to have sight of and access to this woodland.
- 56.8 The resident reported that following the refusal of the recent planning application the current owner had asked if local residents would consider buying the land. Residents had agreed to this and set about creating what is now the White Elm Woodland CIC. The resident explained that, with the help of

local Charities such as the Green Light Trust and Eden Rose Coppice Trust, a proposal had been developed, including a forest school project. The owner had now decided, however, not to sell to the White Elm Woodland CIC. The resident commented that this was probably because the owner wished to maximise the potential income from the land.

- 56.9 The resident explained that as the owner had decided not to sell the land to the White Elm Woodland CIC, an Asset of Community Value application was the only option to try to protect the woodland from further planning applications and potential destruction.
- 56.10 The resident explained that the Council had refused a previous planning application referencing the many protections afforded to this woodland, including a blanket TPO, and policies DM13 (c), DM10, DM31, DM33, CS4 and CS16 of the Ipswich Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Document (2017).” The resident noted that these policies described the woodland as being of "local ecological importance” and that the "aforementioned policies sought collectively to protect and enhance the special character and appearance of the site.”
- 56.11 The resident said that she understood that woods and ponds, semi natural woodlands, open fields and ornamental gardens had all been listed as Assets of Community Value and so this piece of land was not an exceptional case.
- 56.12 The resident noted that Asset of Community Value registration would not place the current owner under an obligation to sell to the land to White Elm Woodland CIC and asked whether the council could put a moratorium on any future planning applications.
- 56.13 Councillor Barber explained that the placing of moratorium on planning applications was beyond the Area Committee’s powers.

57. SEAC/18/19 Funding Request: Oyster Community Press CIC 'Who Cares' Project for Suffolk Family Carers

- 57.1 Alison Smyth, Oyster Community Press, explained that the project would try to support unpaid family carers in Ipswich through printmaking workshops, which would provide respite and build support. An exhibition of the work produced in the workshops would then be given at Dance East.
- 57.2 Councillor Harsant noted the success of previous projects run by Oyster Community Press, giving a workshop which brought marginalised people in Holywells Ward together as an example.

Resolved:

that the South East Area Committee approve funding of £450 from the South East Area Committee Budget to the Oyster Community Press CIC for the ‘Who Cares’ project.

58. SEAC/18/20: Funding Request: Ipswich Jazz Festival 2019

- 58.1 Neil Bateman, Director of Ipswich Jazz Festival, explained that Jazz music had influenced many other styles of music but that it had become an elitist form of music. The aim of this project was to bring Jazz to more people through a series of concerts at St Peters by the Waterfront. Funding from the Area Committee would allow the Festival to make a Family Jazz show and workshop and a Brazilian Jazz show free, as well as providing concessionary tickets for £1 to other shows.
- 58.2 Councillor Connelly commented that the Jazz Festival had been very successful in past years and said that the aim of bringing Jazz closer to the people was a commendable one.

Resolved:

that the South East Area Committee approve funding of £581.25 from the South East Area Committee Budget to the Ipswich Jazz Festival for two free concerts and to subsidise concessionary tickets.

59. SEAC/18/21 Funding Request: Holywells Park Baby Bereavement Memorial Tree Signs

- 59.1 The Community Engagement Officer, Simon Lanning, explained that a team of Midwives at Ipswich Hospital had created a support group to help bereaved parents deal with their loss. The group had created, with the assistance of the Parks Service, a memorial garden in Holywells Park, which contained a tree shaped metal memorial commemorating miscarried pregnancies and early infant mortalities. The group had suggested that signage be provided to help people find the garden. Parks and Cemeteries had developed a scheme to provide appropriate signage, consisting of 8 posts, which would cost £960.
- 59.2 Councillor Harsant said that she supported the proposal but asked whether the signs would make vandalism, which had previously been experienced in the memorial garden, more likely and whether CCTV had been fitted covering the area. Mr Lanning agreed that the signage would make the garden easier to find, but that it would also make its purpose clearer, which might deter vandals. Mr Lanning agreed to check if CCTV had been installed in the area. SCC Councillor Gaylard commented that CCTV may not be appropriate as families were likely to want privacy in the memorial garden.
- 59.3 Councillor Barber commented that losing a child was a very difficult experience and said that if the proposal helped to make that a little easier then it was worth funding.
- 59.4 Councillor Studd noted that the Parks Service was funding the cost of installing the posts which he commented was a very generous gesture.
- 59.5 Councillor Cook asked whether any financial provision for maintenance had been made. Mr Lanning explained that the Baby Bereavement Group and

Ipswich and Colchester Hospitals Charity would be responsible for any such costs.

Resolved:

that the South East Area Committee approve funding of £960 from the South East Area Committee Budget to Parks and Cemeteries for signage associated with the Baby Bereavement Memorial Tree.

60. SEAC/18/22 Variation to Funding Request Margaret Catchpole Bowls Club Pavilion Extension

60.1 Ken Greybourne, a representative of the Margaret Catchpole Bowls Club, explained that good progress had been made on the project, with some work being completed for less than the original cost estimates. The club therefore wanted to access the money granted by the South East Area Committee sooner to allow more work to be completed during the 'off-season'.

60.2 Councillor Harsant commented that she had confidence in the club achieving its aims and felt that the funding ought to be released as soon as possible.

60.3 Councillor Handley asked whether the building would be secured before or as a result of the Council's funding as the report was not clear on this. The Community Engagement Officer, Simon Lanning explained that some of the information in the report was now out of date.

60.4 Councillor Cook commented that he was concerned that the Committee was not able to see up to date financial information or an accurate project plan. Councillor Connelly commented that considering the good progress to date, and the savings already made, it would seem that the Bowls Club could continue their project without immediate access to the funding.

Resolved:

that consideration of the report be deferred to the South East Area Committee Meeting on 16 January 2019.

61. Community Intelligence - Verbal Update from Ward Councillors

61.1 Councillor Connelly explained that the Gainsborough Forum had recently employed a Community Worker and that he hoped that this would mean that the forum's work would continue to improve.

62. SEAC/18/23 Area Committee Financial Update

62.1 Ian Blofield, Head of Housing and Community Services, reported that at the start of the meeting, the South East Area Committee had an unallocated budget of £4,055.83. Following the commitment of £1,991.25 arising from the approved funding requests the unallocated South East Area Committee budget was now £2,064.58.

Resolved:

that the financial statement at Appendix 1 of the report be noted.

Reason:

To provide clear and transparent details of the amount of funds available to the Area Committee to deliver the priorities in its action plan.

The meeting closed at 9.18 pm

Chair