

RAYLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
held on 5th March 2018 at 7.30pm
at the Pavilion, King George V Playing Field, Rayleigh

PRESENT

Chairman: Cllr Mrs C Roe

Councillors: E Dray, R Dowell, C Lumley, Mrs D Mercer, Mrs J Sawford, B Smart, Mrs M Spencer, C Stanley, I Ward, Mrs C Callis, R Shorter and J Lawmon

Visitors: Essex County Cllr Mrs J Lumley

Mrs Beverley Gould, ECC Principal Transport Strategy & Engagement Officer (left at 8.38pm)

Mr Anthony Buston, Senior Transport Strategy & Engagement Officer (left at 8.38pm)

Mr M Davies, Public Footpaths Representative and Chairman of Rayleigh Through the Looking Glass and Rayleigh Town Museum

In attendance: Mrs K Cumberland, Town Clerk

183 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs Mrs C Roe, C Stanley, I Ward and Mrs J Lumley declared a non-pecuniary interest as members of RDC.

Cllr Mrs J Lumley declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of ECC.

Cllr Mrs J Sawford declared a non-pecuniary interest in regard to the MegaCentre for minute no 200.4.

184 PUBLIC FORUM

There were no members of the public present.

185 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Cllrs R Dray and Mrs C Pavelin.

186 SUBSTITUTES

Cllr E Dray substituted for Cllr R Dray

187 NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS ATTENDING

Cllrs R Shorter and Mrs C Callis attended the meeting.

188 FAIRGLEN INTERCHANGE IMPROVEMENT SCHEME - PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Beverley Gould, ECC Principal Transport Strategy & Engagement Officer, and Mr Anthony Buston, Senior Transport Strategy & Engagement Officer, to the meeting.

Mrs Gould informed members about the current consultation for the A127/A130 Fairglen Interchange Improvement Scheme. Members had previously been issued with an information book regarding this consultation and noted that it ends on 20th March 2018.

Members also received information from ECC regarding the Pre-Application Advice Request no CC/BAS/05/18/PRE and noted that ECC is inviting observations by 5th March 2018.

In response to member's questions Mrs Gould advised the following:

Phase 1 cannot be speeded up. ECC has to conduct various stages including a business case process, surveys, design, modelling, planning approvals, tendering etc. to satisfy the funding requirements for DfT / SELEP

It is not possible to commence Phase 2 when Phase 1 has been completed as Phase 2 will be considered in 15 – 20 years and its implementation will depend on growth. There is no funding for Phase 2 at present and, if it is implemented after this time it will complement Phase 1.

Traffic will not be allowed to turn left on the proposed link road from A130 to A127 via A1245 as ECC does not want to overload the Carpenters Arms junction. However, it is acknowledged that drivers will want to turn left and this will be deterred by the design lay out and traffic regulations. Cameras will not be installed and ECC will monitor the situation.

The new link road is unable to be two way as this would involve the construction of a new junction, which is not needed and is too expensive.

The major roads network (A13, A127, A414 and A12) is currently out to consultation and how these support the strategic network is being looked into. The very long term plan maybe to put forward another Thames crossing in 2050. However, we cannot keep building our way out of traffic congestion and need to consider alternative forms of transport, which are suitable and affordable.

It has been proved by modelling that speed reductions reduce collisions, stop bunching, manages traffic flow and allows more capacity on the roads.

ECC will work with local businesses to minimise disruption during the construction work by use of signs and advertising. There will be regular updates on ECC's website and a dedicated 24/7 manned phone line will be available.

ECC is aware that Michelins Farm is to be developed for industrial use. Phase 1 will not include an access road to the site and will not hamper any future construction work for this site.

A footbridge will be installed at Fairglen Roundabout. This junction will continue to be controlled by lights with the addition of a third lane for left turning traffic. There is a site visit tomorrow with land owners of Lychgate Farm My Café area.

The tender for the construction work is totally independent from the Ringway Jacobs Highways Contract which ends at 2022. Negotiations for the construction tender will commence early 2020.

The current blocked roads on the A130 and Rayleigh Spur will be cleared by the installation of traffic signals.

The A127 is over capacity and takes more traffic than some motorways. ECC acknowledges that the A127 becomes blocked, particularly at peak times. Consideration is being given to improvements including widening to 3 lanes. Current legislation does not allow the installation of variable speed limits on A roads, only on motorways. There are many uncontrolled junctions, which slow traffic and consideration may be given to closing access roads and including a service lane.

It is inevitable that improvements in the Rayleigh area will have a knock on effect on other roads. ECC has consulted Southend Borough Council and have received their support.

The yellow box that is currently at Fairglen will probably be removed as part of this scheme as the current entry blocking by traffic tailing back from the signals on the south of Fairglen roundabout should be resolved.

ECC has conducted drainage surveys regarding surface water and are liaising with the Environment Agency.

ECC has not set any money aside to repair local roads that may receive increased use during the construction of Phase 1. ECC will encourage continued use of the main routes by managing traffic flow during the construction period.

Phase 1 includes 2 additional lanes dedicated to left turning traffic from the A127 eastbound to the A1245 north bound. This will double the capacity. Traffic lights will be linked to manage flows and will be set to tidal am/pm. Technology will be used for monitoring and detection of queues.

There is a site meeting at the former Blinking Owl site tomorrow to consider safety improvements including removing the road hatchings. Residents and businesses will be consulted.

East of the Rayleigh Weir is an Air Quality site. Defra is working closely with Rochford and Basildon on the Air Quality Management Plan. Lower traffic speeds and better traffic flow improve air quality.

The issues with traffic signals at the Rayleigh Weir is being discussed later on this agenda. It took a long time to get the Data Link installed to manage the signals from County Hall. The system will be able to manage itself. There will be detectors in the slip roads, which will be able to change the signals to improve traffic flow. CCTV is also used to manage the system remotely. In 3 to 4 months time we should see some improvements.

Members thanked Mrs Gould and Mr Buston for attending the meeting and congratulated ECC's engineers for dealing with such a complex matter and producing a well thought out proposal.

RECOMMENDED that (i) members would respond individually to the consultation and (ii) the Town Council would not respond to the Pre-Planning consultation.

189 MINUTES OF ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING held on 22nd January 2018

RESOLVED to sign the minutes as a correct record.

190 COMMITTEE BUDGET

Members received and approved the Committee budget for 2017/2018.

RECOMMENDED to approve the Committee budget.

191 RAYLEIGH IN BLOOM SUB-COMMITTEE

191.1 Floral Displays

Members received notes of an informal meeting that took place with PHS (floral contractor) on 13th February 2018. A member expressed concern that the ground cover plant that had been suggested for under trees is too prolific. Alternatives will be discussed with the contractor.

ECC has been requested to conduct the full structural survey of lamp columns for florals and Christmas Lights.

RECOMMENDED to discuss alternative ground cover plants with contractor.

191.2 Litter Pickers

Members noted that 12 litter pickers have been purchased.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

191.3 Rose/Shrub Beds in Town Centre

Members received the list of those nominated to check and report on the condition of the town centre beds for which the Town Council is responsible. It was noted that

Elm Horticultural Ltd (maintenance contractor) has applied mulch to all of the beds. It was agreed to contact Elm to ascertain when pruning and feeding will take place. It was noted that Elm has been instructed to conduct the tree survey within the bed on Crown Hill.

RECOMMENDED to contact contractor accordingly.

192 ALLOTMENTS SUB-COMMITTEE

Members noted that a Sub-Committee meeting is due to be held in May 2018.

The resident of Station Avenue who was provided with a key to the new gate onto Kenilworth Gardens for rear access to his property, has offered to clear the brambles in the area around the electricity sub-station. The debris will be collected by the Town Council's contractor.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

193 LOWER WYBURNS WOODS, DAWS HEATH ROAD

193.1 General Maintenance

Members noted that regular fortnightly site inspections are continuing and received a report from the most recent inspection that took place on 22nd February 2018. Members received a report from a site meeting that also took place on 22nd February 2018 with Elm Horticulture Ltd (the maintenance contractor) and Sub-Committee members in attendance.

Members noted that a litter pick is being arranged with the Friends of Lower Wyburns Woods and the RIB Committee for Saturday 24th March or 7th April 2018 for the Keep Britain Tidy Organisation's Spring Tidy Up.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

193.2 Flood Alleviation Scheme

Members received a further update from Mr Roger Webster of the Environment Agency:

We are still committed to setting up a working partnership with Southend Borough Council. We have been discussing how this can be set up bearing in mind the Borough Engineer who you met before has now retired and they have been recruiting for his replacement.

I have spoken to my Area Flood and Coastal Risk Manager who has confirmed he is prepared to allocate additional manpower/resource from the EA to push this forward. With that offer in mind he is programming in a meeting this month to talk with Southend BC to foster further mutual commitment and momentum for the scheme so that it can support our Project Delivery Unit (PDU) who help develop flood alleviation schemes in our current 6 year programme.

Once we have an outcome following the meeting I will update you further.
I apologise that our message currently sounds a bit repetitive but I can assure you there is a desire to get this Project moving.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

193.3 RDC's Tree Survey

Members noted that, following a tree inspection, remedial work took place on 23rd February 2018.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

194 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SUB-COMMITTEE

Members noted that ECC has been requested to conduct the full structural survey of lamp columns for florals and Christmas Lights. Aylesford Electrical (Christmas Lights contractor) has submitted a quote for replacement lights, which will be considered at the next Sub-Committee meeting.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

195 RAYLEIGH MARKET SUB-COMMITTEE

Members noted the following:

The Wednesday market was cancelled on 24th January 2018 due to high winds.

The Italian Market will return to Rayleigh on Saturday 24th March 2018.

The new Market Inspector commenced duties from Wednesday 7th February 2018 for a 3 month trial period.

Following RDC's approval of two planning applications, an application is to be made to SEPP for changes to traffic regulations. Members received correspondence with RDC on this matter regarding pedestrianisation of the existing taxi rank as outlined in the adopted Rayleigh Area Action Plan. It was agreed to hold a meeting with RDC and SEPP to consider the matter before an application is submitted to SEPP. Some members agreed that this change would improve the High Street and safety of pedestrians crossing the road, however, concerns regarding controls on the use of the area, taxi pick up and drop off points and loss of parking were raised.

RECOMMENDED to hold a meeting with RDC and SEPP before submitting an application to SEPP.

196 TRINITY FAIR

Members noted that the next Sub-Committee meeting is due to be held on Wednesday 14th March 2018 at 7.30pm.

The KGV Playing Field Committee has agreed to provide further storage facilities for the Town Council within the playing field and advice regarding whether planning approval is required by RDC is being sought.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

197 HIGHWAYS

197.1 Essex Highways

Members received a response from Essex County Cllr Mrs J Lumley regarding the traffic signals at Rayleigh Weir and noted that the new link for 'responsive signals', which are capable of responding to varying traffic conditions, will be implemented within the next three months.

Members noted that Essex Highways have agreed to conduct a survey at the Websters Way/Hockley Road traffic light junction after safety concerns were raised regarding drivers jumping the lights.

Members received information from Essex County Cllr Ian Grundy, the Cabinet Member for Highways, outlining maintenance plans and budgets for the forthcoming year.

Members received notification of an opportunity to take part in an Essex Highways Service Delivery Survey between 23rd February and 6th April 2018 regarding priorities and satisfaction levels associated with specific services provided by Essex Highway.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

197.2 Street Lights

Members received advice from Essex Highways in response to questions raised by the Town Council regarding the length of time to repair some street lights and the replacement of bulbs.

It was noted that a small number of faults require a UKPN specialist team to attend and, as this team covers a large area, repairs can take longer to be conducted.

If a column is found to be defective close to the end of a financial year it may have to wait for replacement in the following year.

If a street light operates a part night programme then this light will continue this programme when converted to led technology. There are five reasons a column would be changed to led: All night light, if the column is over 8m in height, a column that requires traffic management to repair (if hard to reach), column replacements, the lantern is beyond repair.

A member advised that the Rayleigh Times had incorrectly reported that RDC has announced that all columns will be converted to led. It was noted that the conversion to led is a 5 year programme.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

197.3 Zebra Crossing Lighting – Eastwood Road Near Finchfield

Members noted that, in response to an ECC Member’s enquiry, Cllr Mrs J Lumley has been advised by Essex Highways that:

Essex Highways have confirmed the fault has been passed to the Out of Hours Team, due to the location, and will be attended to within the next 2-3 weeks. Currently Essex Highways is experiencing a backlog with street lighting inspections. This is due mainly to the volume of reports experienced at this time of year, which has been exacerbated by the need for a number of technicians to be diverted onto the Gritting team to drive the gritting lorries around the county.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

197.4 Websters Way Car Park

Members received information regarding the Public Space Protection Order (Rochford District Council) 2017 with regard to the congregation of motor vehicles and motorcycles in a designated area.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

197.5 Rangers Team

Members noted that this team can conduct minor work such as vegetation clearance, sign cleaning and painting. All work for the Rangers Team must be on the adopted highway and must not involve traffic management or excavation.

RDC has taken over the management of the Rangers Team, however, requests for work must continue to be submitted to Essex Highways for the consideration of the Local Highways Panel. RDC is currently recruiting 2 new staff members for this team and will liaise with the Parish/Town Councils regarding work scheduling.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

198 PUBLIC TRANSPORT/BUS SHELTERS

198.1 Condition of Bus Shelters

There were no reports from members regarding problems with shelters.

Members noted that the Town Council’s contractor has quoted £150 to clear ivy and brambles, which are growing on the redundant shelter on London Road. The contractor has also reported that the roof needs re-felting and the gutters have disappeared. Members acknowledged that this shelter is no longer on a bus route, however, it is most likely to be the oldest bus shelter in the town and there is a strong possibility that this part of London Road may be included within a new bus route

when the new housing development is complete. Members agreed that this substantial brick built shelter should continue to be repaired and maintained for these reasons.

It was agreed for the contractor to clear the ivy and brambles and for quotes to be obtained regarding necessary repairs to the roof and guttering. The Chairman accepted Cllr C Stanley's offer to examine the shelter and to report to the Town Clerk.

RECOMMENDED to (i) continue to repair and maintain the London Road Bus Shelter (ii) instruct contractor to clear ivy and brambles at a cost of £150 and (iii) Cllr C Stanley to inspect shelter and to report to Town Clerk in order for quotes for repairs to roof and guttering to be obtained.

198.2 Bus Timetable

Members noted that the timetables for the no 3 were sent to members.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

198.3 Parish Transport Representatives Meeting

Members noted that Cllrs C Lumley, Mrs J Lumley and E Dray are due to attend the next Transport Representatives meeting on Tuesday 13th March 2018 at the Mill Arts and Events Centre.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

199 CRIME & ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR MATTERS

199.1 Local Community Meeting

Members received a report from the Committee Chairman Cllr Mrs C Roe of the LCM that took place in the Rayleigh Town Council Chamber on 1st February 2018. Members agreed that this was not a very well attended meeting and it was not a drop in session. The date of future LCMs is not known at this stage.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

199.2 Community Special Constables

Members noted that the scheme is being reviewed by the police and fire service at a meeting in mid-March, however, the co-ordinator has advised that Rayleigh should continue to progress the recruitment advertising for two Specials for the town.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

199.3 Essex Police

Members received information regarding funding for Essex Police.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

200 COMMUNITY SAFETY

200.1 Community Speed Watch

Members noted that six dates during March and April have been proposed and will be sent to volunteers.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

200.2 Defibrillator

Members noted that the involvement by PubWatch in the provision of a defibrillator for the Grade II listed red phone box outside the Crown Pub on the High Street is now doubtful and RDC has advised the Town Council to seek grant funding.

Members noted that Aylesford Electrical Ltd has submitted a quote of £450 to repaint this phone box. Listed Building Consent will need to be obtained from RDC.

RECOMMENDED to (i) seek grant funding for the provision of a defibrillator (ii) accept quote by Aylesford to repaint phone box and (iii) obtain Listed Building Consent.

200.3 Senior Safety Road Show

Members received a report from RDC regarding the Senior Safety Road Show that took place on 15th January 2018. The event was very successful. 55 people attended, 17 organisations had stands, some of which gave presentations. The Town Council contributed £500 to this event.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

200.4 Crucial Crew

Members noted that RDC had a meeting at the MegaCentre on 22nd February 2018 to consider this year's Crucial Crew, an update is yet to be received.

RECOMMENDED to continue to discuss with RDC.

201 CCTV

Members noted that the minutes of the Working Group meeting that was held on 12th February 2018 were considered by the Full Council meeting on 26th February 2018. Members agreed that, following advice from RDC that Boots has confirmed that they will provide images to the police from their exterior camera, the Town Council no longer needs a camera on M & Co. It was also agreed to remove the one remaining High Street camera at Subway to allow the Town Council to have no further CCTV responsibilities in the High Street in view of data protection laws.

RECOMMENDED to remove CCTV cameras from M & Co and Subway.

202 GRAFFITI

Members noted that RDC has advised that, unless the graffiti is offensive, they would not undertake removal as there is no statutory duty to do so. It is up to the land/property owner to clear graffiti on their premises.

Members reported graffiti at the following locations:

Down Hall Road Bus Shelter (ECC owned) – report to ECC
Bairstow Eves – previously reported to RDC
Audley End Doctors Surgery area – previously reported to RDC

RECOMMENDED to report bus shelter to ECC.

203 STREET FURNITURE

203.1 New Notice Boards

Members noted that the three new noticeboards for London Road, Hambro Parade and The Chase are due to be delivered to the contractor this week for installation.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

203.2 Repainting of Street Furniture

Members noted that Aylesford Electrical Ltd have been informed that they have been awarded the contract to repaint street furniture in the town centre and are due to commence this week.

Essex County Cllr Mrs J Lumley informed members that Essex Highways has advised that repair work has been delayed as they are experiencing difficulties in obtaining replacement parts for the Crown Hill and Eastwood Road railings. Members acknowledged the importance of railings on these corners to deter lorries mounting the pavement.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

203.3 Welcome to Rayleigh Signs

Members agreed the wording for the new sign to be:

An ancient market town recorded in the Domesday Book
Anglia in Bloom Gold Award.

RECOMMENDED to order signs accordingly

203.4 New Bench on London Hill

Members noted that, following permission being given by ECC to install a new bench on London Hill, a letter was sent to Our Lady of Ransom Church on 26th January 2018, and no objections have been received. The bench will now be ordered.

RECOMMENDED to order the bench.

203.5 Town Sign at Top of Crown Hill

Members noted that a quote of £200 has been received from a sign writer to repaint the Town Sign at the top of Crown Hill if it can be removed and delivered to the sign writer.

A quote of £205 was received from Elm Horticultural Ltd for the removal, delivery and re-installation of the sign.

Members accepted both quotes totalling £405.

RECOMMENDED to arrange removal, repainting and relocation of sign at a cost of £405.

204 STREET FUNDRAISERS/BIG ISSUE/CHARITY SHOPS/BUSKERS/BEGGARS

Members noted that the Big Issue has appointed a new vendor badge number 4544. Reports of other vendors have been made to the Big Issue representative for action to be taken. The Town Clerk will arrange a meeting to take place with the new vendor and representative in the near future.

Members received notes of a meeting held on Monday 5th March 2018 regarding homelessness in the town. It was noted that Cllr B Smart also volunteered to approach the homeless who sit on pavements in the town centre. It was noted that a further meeting will be convened after the Churches have met on 14th March 2018.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

205 EASTER EGG HUNT

Members noted that the Easter Egg Hunt is being arranged to take place between Thursday 29th March and Monday 9th April 2018. Entry forms will be available from, and should be returned to, the Library, Squires Coffee Shop, Amos Estate Agents, the Pavilion Snack Bar and Town Council office.

The competition will be advertised on noticeboards, local press, local schools, websites and face book pages.

Makro has been invited to sponsor the competition again this year and the prizes will be presented to the winners at the Annual Town Meeting on Wednesday 25th April 2018.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

206 LITTER IN TOWN CENTRE

Members noted that, following questions raised at previous meeting, RDC has confirmed that the contractors only sweep pavements and have never cleared up chewing gum. RDC has used a jet washer to clear chewing gum. RDC is interested in the vacuum litter picker and details have been sent of the supplier.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

207 TOWN CENTRE CLOCK

Members noted that the lighting of the dials stopped working last month and bulbs were replaced by the manufacturer on 21st February 2018.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

208 RAILWAY STATION

Members received notification that platform and lattice bridge refurbishment work will commence at the beginning of March 2018 at Rayleigh Railway Station. The work is expected to be completed by the end of May 2018. Letters have been sent by Greater Anglia to residents within 250metres of the Railway Station.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

209 PUBLIC FOOTPATHS

Mr M Davies, the footpaths representative, provided a report.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

210 RAYLEIGH TOWN MUSEUM

Mr M Davies, Chairman, Rayleigh Town Museum, provided a report.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

211 HERITAGE PLAQUES

211.1 Heritage Plaques

Members noted that the wording of the plaque for the Eastwood Road entrance to the playing field is to change to say playing field instead of park in the last sentence as follows:

KING GEORGE'S PLAYING FIELD

For many years Webster's Meadows was owned by the family butchers of that name for grazing cattle prior to slaughter and sale at their shop in Rayleigh High Street.

*In 1936 Norman Webster decided to sell the land although the Rayleigh Urban District Council did not proceed with the purchase until 1950 with part funding from the King George's Playing Field Foundation.
One of the first events to take place once the playing field opened was part of the town's Queen Elizabeth Coronation celebrations in 1953. (This is the same length as the plaque on the Windmill).*

RECOMMENDED to order the new plaque.

211.2 Heritage Schemes App

Mr M Davies advised that no further progress had been made in discussions regarding a new Heritage Schemes App.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

212 RAYLEIGH THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

Mr M Davies, Chairman of RTTLG, provided a report.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

213 RAYLEIGH MOUNT

Members noted that the National Trust Local Mount Committee meeting that was due to take place on 1st March 2018 was cancelled due to adverse weather. Cllr Mrs C Pavelin and C Lumley will be invited to attend the next meeting.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

214 RAYLEIGH LIBRARY

It was noted that members are invited by ECC to attend one of a series of events being held throughout March for 'Your community, libraries and you'. The event at Rayleigh Library will take place on Wednesday 14th March 2018 between 7.00pm to 9.00pm.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

The meeting closed at 9.40pm

Chairman

Signature..... Date.....