

RAYLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING  
held on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2018 at 7.30pm at  
the Pavilion, King George V Playing Field, Rayleigh

PRESENT

Chairman: Cllr Mrs C Roe

Councillors: Mrs D Mercer, B Smart, Mrs M Spencer, Mrs C Callis, C Stanley, Mrs J Lumley and J Lawmon

In attendance: Mrs K Cumberland, Town Clerk

The Committee Chairman advised members that agenda items regarding Highways would be discussed at the end of the meeting.

91 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs Mrs C Roe, C Stanley and Mrs J Lumley declared a non-pecuniary interest in matters relating to RDC by virtue of being members of that Council.

Cllr Mrs J Lumley declared a non-pecuniary interest in matters relating to ECC by virtue of being a member of that Council.

Cllr Mrs M Spencer declared a non-pecuniary interest as a judge for Anglia in Bloom.

92 PUBLIC FORUM

There were no members of the public present.

93 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Cllrs R Dowell, R Dray, Mrs J Sawford and I Ward

The Committee Chairman also passed on apologies for Mr Mike Davies who is usually a visitor to this Committee.

94 SUBSTITUTES

Cllr Mrs C Callis substituted for Cllr R Dray.

95 NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS ATTENDING

None.

96 MINUTES OF ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING held on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2018

RESOLVED to sign the minutes as a correct record.

97 COMMITTEE BUDGET

Members received and approved the Committee budget for 2018/2019.

The Committee Chairman asked members to inform the Town Clerk of suggestions for new projects or further expenditure in the next financial year in order for quotes to be obtained for the next Committee meeting when the budget will be discussed.

RECOMMENDED to (i) approve Committee budget and (ii) forward suggestions to Town Clerk for next year's budget.

98 RAYLEIGH IN BLOOM SUB-COMMITTEE

98.1 Anglia in Bloom

Members noted that the AIB Conference is due to be held at Filby in Norfolk on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2018 with a Committee Clerk and Cllrs I Ward and Mrs M Spencer in attendance.

Rayleigh's Presentation Evening will be held at the Baptist Church on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2018 from 6.30pm. The Anglia in Bloom judges who visited Rayleigh this year have agreed to attend on this evening.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

98.2 Rose/Shrub Beds in Town Centre

Members did not report any problems with rose and shrub beds in the town. Cllr C Stanley informed members that he had planted 9 new rose bushes in the Barclays bed and pruned the roses. Members received Elm's report and noted that Elm has applied bark chippings to beds to reduce weed growth.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

98.3 Removal of Flowers in Town Centre

Members noted that PHS is in the process of removing summer planting from beds and baskets.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

99 ALLOTMENTS SUB-COMMITTEE

Members received some of the quotes for pathway work for the Lower Wyburns site and noticeboards for Lower Wyburns and Sweyne Park for the CIF application.

Members noted that rent notices are due to be sent to tenants during December 2018 and received a list of current plot rents to review these charges. Members agreed to increase the charges by 2.0% to the nearest £.

RECOMMENDED (i) that quotes are noted and (ii) to increase allotment plot rents by 2% to the nearest £.

## 100 LOWER WYBURNS WOODS, DAWS HEATH ROAD

### 100.1 General Maintenance

Members received a report from the most recent inspection by a Committee Clerk and a member. Members also received Elm Horticulture's monthly report. It was noted that RDC is responsible for clearing fly tipping on the A127 side of the boundary fence and Elm should remove fly tipping within the woodland. Outstanding matters will be followed up.

RECOMMENDED to contact RDC and Elm regarding fly tipping.

### 100.2 Flood Alleviation Scheme

Members received a report from a meeting at Anglian Sewage Works on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2018 with the Town Clerk and Cllr C Stanley in attendance. Ringway Jacobs will be contacted regarding whether the next planned meeting for 30<sup>th</sup> October 2018 is to go ahead. Cllr C Stanley expressed concerns about the Environment Agency's understanding of the proposed scheme.

RECOMMENDED to contact Ringway Jacobs regarding next meeting date.

### 100.3 The Queen's Commonwealth Canopy

Members noted that trees are expected to be delivered to the Town Council at the end of September/early October 2018 for planting in the woodland by the Town Council Chairman. A plaque will be installed. The Woodland Trust will be contacted as it was reported that a neighbouring parish had received their trees.

RECOMMENDED to contact Woodland Trust.

## 101 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SUB-COMMITTEE

Members noted that Marcos Bar will hold their fund raising event on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

Members are requested to volunteer as marshals to assist at the Christmas Lights event.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

## 102 RAYLEIGH MARKET SUB-COMMITTEE

### 102.1 General Matters

Members noted that the market on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2018 was cancelled for safety reasons due to predicted high winds.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

### 102.2 Rayleigh Area Action Plan

Members noted that Essex Highways has advised that they are currently processing data from recent traffic surveys and cross referencing to the Rayleigh Area Action Plan. ECC will suggest a date for a further meeting in due course.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

### 102.3 Saturday Markets

Members noted that general markets will be held on Saturdays in the town centre during November/December 2018, commencing from 3<sup>rd</sup> November. RDC has confirmed that it will suspend parking fees in its car parks on Saturdays during December.

The Committee Chairman advised that she is willing to attend on Saturdays to collect any outstanding rent and to conduct inspections.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

## 103 TOWN COUNCIL CIVIC EVENT - REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 11<sup>th</sup> November 2018

Members noted that a press release had been sent regarding the volunteers who had installed 12,000 knitted poppies on wire netting at the weekend for the display for Holy Trinity Church. A dedication service will be held on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2018 with the Town Council Chairman, Mark Francois MP and Rev David Oxtoby in attendance. Work from schools will be displayed inside the Church with the 10 soldier silhouettes.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

## 104 HIGHWAYS

### 104.1 General

Members did not report any new defects.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

## 104.2 Essex Highways

Cllr Mrs J Lumley reported that the flyover at the Army and Navy site in Chelmsford has been closed for stabilisation work due to movement in the pillars. An in depth engineering survey will be conducted. The normal cycle is every 3 years. In response to a member's question, Cllr Mrs J Lumley advised that the cost of installing a second flyover for two way traffic would be prohibitive.

Members received a report from County Cllr Mrs J Lumley regarding the railings in the High Street and noted that an engineer has visited the site at the Crown Hill/Eastwood Road junction. The engineer has suggested moving the railings further back onto the footway to allow more road space for vehicles. Members disagreed with this suggestion due to the narrowness of the pavement and asked for improved protection from vehicles mounting the kerb for pedestrians and the corner premises at this site.

Members noted that ward members had received a consultation regarding a proposal to install speed cushions in Victoria Avenue between London Road junction and Cheapside West junction, in order to reduce speeding in this area. This matter was discussed at the LHP meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2018. Town Council Ward members views have been passed to Essex Highways.

Members noted that the Essex Association of Local Councils is hosting a Highways Briefing alongside Essex Highways on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2018 at Foakes Hall, Great Dunmow. This event is free of charge for members to attend.

All members had received a letter by email last week from the EALC regarding County Cllrs being able to nominate 20 potholes for repair; 10 up to Christmas and 10 in the Spring. The County Cllrs must make their selections by 19<sup>th</sup> October 2018. In order to progress this issue, a meeting was held with the Town Clerk, the Environment Committee Chairman and Cllr Mrs J Lumley and it was agreed that the office would print off reports of every pot hole from ECC's website on main roads and cut throughs in Rayleigh. County Cllrs would then discuss with an ECC engineer which potholes should be repaired. Members were encouraged to report any potholes that they feel should be included for consideration to the office. It was noted that potholes in side roads are to be an ECC priority for repair later this year.

Further to discussions at the Full Council meeting last week, members noted that a parish member is to be selected to attend LHP meetings to speak on behalf of all parishes. The matter is expected to be discussed at a forthcoming RHALC meeting. At present the LHP has 4 County and 4 RDC members and this will increase to 5 County, 4 RDC and 1 parish member. LHP meetings are very structured and costings are produced for proposed schemes with members being expected to produce evidence of the need for any proposed scheme.

It was noted that, further to discussions at the Full Council meeting last week, the leader of RDC made the decision not to match fund highways repair costs, which has meant that RDC LHP will not receive £100,000 of additional funding. 8 of the 12 Districts in Essex agreed to match fund.

RECOMMENDED (i) that the information is noted and (ii) to report any potholes to the Town Council office this week.

#### 104.3 Rangers Team

It was confirmed that the Rangers Team do not conduct work on an annual timetable basis and all work has to be reported for action  
RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

#### 104.4 Verge Cutting on the Highway by RDC

It was noted that a member's complaint has been forwarded to RDC regarding grass clippings being left on verges. There is a concern that these would kill the grass and would also block drains. The Committee Chairman will speak to RDC's Portfolio Holder.

RECOMMENDED for the Committee Chairman to report back to next meeting.

### 105 PUBLIC TRANSPORT/BUS SHELTERS

#### 105.1 Town Council owned Bus Shelters

Cllr B Smart asked for the notice boards within the shelters to be wiped over as part of the monthly clean.

RECOMMENDED to inform contractor.

#### 105.2 ECC Passenger Transport

Members noted that the next Passenger Transport meeting will be held at the Town Council office on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2018 from 10.00am.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

### 106 CRIME & ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR MATTERS

Members noted that the Town Council and Essex Police are advertising the recruitment of two Community Special Constables for Rayleigh and received a report from the coordinator for Essex.

As recruits have not been forthcoming for Rayleigh, members considered a suggestion whether the Town Council should fund the costs of employing SIA trained personnel to patrol the town centre during the busier times in the run up to Christmas in order to deter purse snatches. Members received advice from the police on this matter and agreed to discuss with the Chamber of Trade at their forthcoming meeting. It was agreed that the contractors would not be responsible for dealing with issues, such as shop lifting, and that the matter should be referred to the Full Council with costs for consideration.

RECOMMENDED (i) to discuss with the Chamber of Trade the employment of SIA trained contractors to patrol the High Street and (ii) to obtain costs and refer the matter to the Full Council.

## 107 COMMUNITY SAFETY

Members noted that a Community Speed Watch session was held on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2018 for 'European Day Without A Road Death' and received a report.

Members noted that the police have approved two more locations for Community Speed Watch at Station Crescent and Victoria Road, Rayleigh.

Members received information regarding a 'Surround a Town' event, which is a Safer Essex Roads partnership between the police, fire service, highways and other partners to work together in a town in Essex to reduce casualties on our roads and to raise awareness of road safety. The event will take place in Basildon on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2018. It was agreed for members to inform the office if they wish to conduct a speed watch session on that day.

RECOMMENDED that (i) the information is noted and (ii) to inform the office if members wish to conduct a speed watch session on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

## 108 GRAFFITI

A member reported that graffiti has been seen in Websters Way on a brick wall surrounding the electricity sub-station at the back of the Halifax and the Pink Toothbrush, near the double gates, RDC will be informed.

RDC has previously 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.

RDC has been asked to contact Stacey's Auction House regarding graffiti on the side wall of their property.

RECOMMENDED to report new incident to RDC.

## 109 STREET FURNITURE

### 109.1 General

Members considered a suggestion that the Town Council employs a contractor to remove posters and to conduct any necessary cleaning of street furniture if required. It was agreed to obtain costs for the next Committee meeting.

RECOMMENDED to obtain costs of removal of posters and necessary cleaning of street furniture for next Committee meeting.

## 109.2 Chewing Gum Bins

Members received further information from the contractor and from Southend Borough Council in order to consider whether the Town Council wishes to install chewing gum bins in the High Street. RDC has confirmed that planning permission would not be required for these bins. It was agreed that the bins would not be appropriate for Rayleigh town centre and members did not feel confident that they would be used for the intended purpose.

RECOMMENDED not to install chewing gum bins in Rayleigh town centre.

## 110 STREET FUNDRAISERS/BIG ISSUE/CHARITY SHOPS/BUSKERS/BEGGARS

### 110.1 Big Issue

Members noted that the Big Issue has appointed two new vendors to Rayleigh who have been instructed not to attend the High Street on Wednesdays and Saturdays. The same badge will be shared by the vendors and the number will be issued to the Town Council in due course.

However, a vendor was seen on Saturday but left when challenged by the Committee Chairman and another Big Issue vendor was seen with an SSO badge (for Southend). The Big Issue will be contacted.

RECOMMENDED to contact the Big Issue.

### 110.2 Homelessness

Members noted that there has been a recent increase in the number of homeless and/or beggars in the town centre. Cllr B Smart advised that there are currently three regular beggars and he has approached each to offer assistance. RDC's Homeless team has advised that they will visit one tomorrow as he was interested in receiving their support. Cllr B Smart advised that it is difficult to get volunteers to patrol the High Street and to approach beggars. Members expressed concern about reports of a homeless person sleeping in the old Crown Hill Toilet building and noted that RDC is dealing with this issue.

Mr Bob Fortt's (Police Anti-Social Behaviour Officer) report advised that no incidents have been reported to the police (the police only act if beggars are aggressive or anti-social). It was agreed that the public need to be educated against giving to beggars as this attracts this behaviour and an item will be included in the Town Council's newsletter. The matter will be discussed at the forthcoming Chamber of Trade meeting and it will be suggested that shops display a sticker with an appropriate message.

RECOMMENDED to (i) mention the matter in the Town Council's newsletter and (ii) discuss window stickers with Chamber of Trade.

### 110.3 Charities

Members noted that RDC's Licensing Officer has advised that the charities which have been present in the town centre for the purposes of signing the public up to direct debits are under a Government exemption certificate and do not come within licensing. RDC and the Town Council have a Street Management Agreement which states that they may not attend the town centre on Wednesdays and Saturdays. The Town Clerk had written to SEPP regarding the parking of a van on the pavement and has written to one of the charities regarding the use of a gazebo on the pavement in strong winds.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

### 111 LITTER IN TOWN CENTRE

Members reported that:

Broken glass was seen in Bellingham Lane on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2018 at 9.45am and glass bottles were seen in a flowerbed by Grouts at 10.45am on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

This is contrary to assurances given by RDC that the town centre will be clear of litter by the time the shops open. RDC has confirmed that their contractors should remove litter from the flower beds.

RECOMMENDED to report to RDC.

### 112 TOWN CENTRE CLOCK

Members reported that the Town Clock appears to be in good working order.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

### 113 TOURISM FORUM

Members noted that the Town Council Chairman and Town Clerk have been invited by RDC to attend a Tourism Forum on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018 at 10.00am at the Freight House, Rochford.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

### 114 PUBLIC FOOTPATHS

Members were invited to raise any matters regarding public footpaths with the Town Clerk.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

115 RAYLEIGH TOWN MUSEUM

The Environment Committee Chairman reported that the volunteers are working well to keep the Museum operating as normal and any issues should be reported to her as a member of the Management Committee. The Museum has had 20,000 visitors and the coach trip to Portsmouth was very successful.

RECOMMENDED to report any matters to the Environment Committee Chairman.

116 HERITAGE PLAQUES

Members noted that the Town Guide is in the process of being reprinted.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

117 RAYLEIGH THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

Members were invited to raise any matters regarding Rayleigh Through the Looking Glass with the Town Clerk

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

118 RAYLEIGH MOUNT

Cllr Mrs J Lumley reported that she had attended the meeting of the National Trust Local Mount Committee on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2018 as a County member and advised the following:

The Local Committee Fund has been transferred to the National Trust but is ring fenced for Rayleigh

Mr Skinner is now employed by the National Trust.

There were good attendances for the two performances in the summer.

Original timbers from the Castle will be on display in a cabinet at the Rayleigh Town Museum. There are 50 pieces and some are 8 feet long. The Museum will provide a good environment that is suitable for the condition of the timbers

The duck weed issue in the pond is long standing and treatments have been discussed. Signage will be standardised.

Cllr C Lumley is a private member. Cllrs Mrs C Pavelin (RTC rep) and Cllr R Milne (RDC rep) gave apologies for this meeting.

RECOMMENDED that this information is noted.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm

Chairman

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