

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Community Services Committee held at the Oakwood Centre on Tuesday 9 September 2014 at 7:30 pm**

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**Present:** *Councillors: D. Smith (Chairman); L. Higgs; M. Holmes; C. Lawley; D. Mills; R. Neall; M. Walker*

**Also present:** *Councillors: K. Baker; E. Rowland; A. Chadwick  
J. Freeman and M. Gilbert, Reading Buses  
T. Beck, Principal Transport Planner, Wokingham Borough Council  
S. Milligan, Just Around The Corner Charity*

*22 members of public were present for the start of the meeting, leaving after agenda item 4: Bus Services in Woodley*

**Officers present:** *D. Mander, Town Clerk; L. Matthews, Committee Officer*

25. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor W. Soane.

26. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

27. **MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 3 JUNE 2014**

*[Town Clerk's note: During the meeting an amendment was requested to minute 24: Condition of roads in Woodley, but it was subsequently found that the minutes were correct and that the amendment proposed related to a discussion at Full Council on 24 June 2014.]*

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2014 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

28. **BUS SERVICES IN WOODLEY**

The Chairman welcomed James Freeman, Reading Buses, and Tom Beck, Principal Transport Planner, Wokingham Borough Council, to the meeting and explained that they had been invited to update Members on recent changes to the bus services in Woodley, particularly with regard to the No. 19 service. After the presentation there would be an opportunity for members of the public to ask questions.

James Freeman thanked Members for the invitation to speak and said that Reading Buses always welcomed the opportunity to talk to councillors and members of the public. He then introduced Martijn Gilbert, who will be his successor at Reading Buses from November.

James Freeman started by explaining how the bus services were organised in Woodley. The Nos. 13 and 14 services were provided commercially by Reading Buses and were funded from fare income. There had recently been changes to these services as the fares collected had not been sufficient to cover costs. Since

then there had been an increase in passenger numbers on these routes, meaning that no further changes would need to be made.

James Freeman then explained that the No.19 service was not provided commercially, but under contract to Wokingham Borough Council. In the past the service on this route had been unreliable, due to the length of the route and traffic congestion, and therefore changes had been necessary to make the service more reliable and sustainable. If the route was too long it would require three buses to be out on the route to enable the timetable to be met; by reducing the length of the route, the service could be provided reliably with two buses, enabling the costs to be kept as low as possible. Reading Buses and Wokingham Borough Council had discussed this issue and had worked together to provide the best route and best combination of points served, whilst also improving the reliability of the service. The current route served most of Woodley although Mr Freeman accepted that there were some points that were no longer on the route.

Tom Beck explained that with the old route there had been problems with the reliability of the service and in order to run to the timetable it would have been necessary to have provided a third bus on the route, which was not covered by the current contract. On investigation, much of the delay to the service was found to occur in the area around Fairwater Drive, and this area was also found to have a relatively small number of users. Tom Beck also informed Members that Fairwater Drive had been added to the No.19 route in 2011 to provide a link between Fairwater Drive and the centre of Woodley, and that this link was now provided by the No.14 route. He also reported that a consultation on the route changes had been run by Reading Buses, with leaflets provided on all the No.19 buses and details provided on their website.

James Freeman reported that the resulting No.19 operation was more reliable and carried more passengers than the old service and, while he accepted that the new route did not please residents of Fairwater Drive, the new service was much more logical and sensible and was an improvement over the old service.

The Chairman then asked if any members of public wished to comment or ask a question. The comments made by members of the public related to:

- People who were not mobile could not walk to the top of Fairwater Drive to get a bus.
- It was also difficult for visitors to get to Fairwater Drive and the residents felt cut-off.
- Residents of Fairwater Drive and the roads off Fairwater Drive could no longer use a bus to go to the hospital and had to use taxis.
- To get to Lower Earley from Fairwater Drive it was necessary to take two buses and go via Reading.
- Residents felt that driving along Fairwater Drive would not significantly lengthen the bus route.
- Residents asked if the route could be changed elsewhere to enable the bus to visit Fairwater Drive.
- It was no longer possible to get a bus to Loddon Vale Surgery and many people were not able to walk from the town centre.
- The 13/14 bus stop in Reading had moved to the station and the bus no longer went into Reading town centre.

- There had been insufficient publicity for the consultation on the proposed changes to the bus routes and people had not seen the leaflets that had been put on the buses.

Following these comments the Chairman thanked the members of public for taking the time to tell the Council how they felt and thanked Tom Beck, James Freeman and Martijn Gilbert for attending the meeting.

29. **JUST AROUND THE CORNER**

Sam Milligan, Just Around the Corner charity, was welcomed to the meeting and gave a verbal update on JAC's activities. He reported that the summer term had been successful, and sessions had been held in Woodley and at the stables. Many more young people from Woodley were using the stables, both as a place to work through their problems and as a volunteering opportunity, with volunteers helping with the horses and with the landscaping.

Sam Milligan reported that with the start of the autumn term the atmosphere amongst the young people in Woodley was generally good. As usual for August, the numbers attending the Friday night detached sessions had been very variable recently, with numbers ranging from 15 to more than 30, but he expected that the numbers would increase now that the new school term had started and new groups of friends would be forming.

Sam Milligan invited councillors to visit the Rehoboth Centre and offered to run a team building exercise to thank them for their support.

The Chairman thanked Sam Milligan for all the work that JAC undertook.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note the verbal report from Just Around the Corner charity.

30. **BUDGETARY CONTROL**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note Report No. CS 12/14.

31. **YOUTH WORKING PARTY**

a) **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note Report No. CS 13/14 of the inquorate Youth Working Party meeting held on 9 July 2014.

b) Following the resignation of Councillor Rahmouni from the Liberal Democrat Party the Chairman invited the Liberal Democrat group to nominate another member to the Youth Working Party to ensure compliance with Council Standing Order 4f; that membership of working parties be constituted to be divided between the parties in the same proportion as are members of the Council.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To remove Councillor Rahmouni from the Youth Working Party.
- ◆ To appoint Councillor Lawley to the Youth Working Party.

32. **ALLOTMENTS WORKING PARTY**

As there had not been a meeting of the Allotments Working Party since the last meeting Members noted the update provided in the agenda on developments at the allotments.

On the matter of pest control being carried out by members of the Allotment Tenants Committee, Members asked that the Town Clerk report back to the Committee on the procedures for this and confirm they complied with health and safety and risk management requirements.

Members were pleased to note that there was currently no waiting list for the allotments.

33. **KEEP WOODLEY CLEAN WORKING PARTY**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note Report No. CS 14/14 of the inquorate Keep Woodley Clean Working Party meeting held on 2 July 2014.

34. **WOODLEY TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE**

Members expressed concern that the meeting of the Woodley Town Centre Management Initiative held on 2 July had been inquorate as this meant that proposals suggested at the meeting could not be approved. The Chairman suggested that there might be a higher attendance if the summer meeting was held in June instead of July.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note the report of the inquorate Woodley Town Centre Management Initiative meeting held on 2 July 2014.

35. **HIGHWAYS**

- a) **Road Works/Street Works Major Project Co-ordination meetings**  
Members noted the reports from Councillor Walker on the Wokingham Borough Council Road Works/Street Works Major Project Co-ordination meetings held on 21 May, 24 June, 29 July and 19 August 2014.
- b) **Fairwater Drive, Woodley**  
Members noted that resurfacing work was scheduled to take place from 12 February to 19 February 2015 and that Fairwater Drive would be closed in both directions between its junctions with Woodlands Avenue and Antrim Road. The diversion route for this closure would be via Woodlands Avenue, Crockhamwell Road, Nightingale Road and Fairwater Drive.
- c) **Oak Drive, Woodley**  
Members noted that resurfacing work was scheduled to take place from 23 February to 24 February 2015 and that Oak Drive would be closed in both directions for its full length. There was no diversion route applicable to this closure.
- d) **Western Avenue, Woodley**  
Members noted that resurfacing work was scheduled to take place from 16 February to 18 February 2015 and that Western Avenue would be closed in both directions between its junctions with Butts Hill Road and

Reading Road. The diversion route for this closure would be via Butts Hill Road, Headley Road and Reading Road.

e) **Wallace Close**

Members noted that the Service Delivery Manager at Wokingham Highways Alliance had agreed to put Wallace Close forward for consideration when the next resurfacing programme was compiled.

f) **Lytham Road**

Members considered a request from a resident for a bus shelter to be provided at the bus stop in Lytham Road and

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To write to Wokingham Borough Council to ask if the bus stop on Lytham Road would be a suitable site for a bus shelter with seating.

36. **PART-NIGHT STREET LIGHTING**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note information received from Wokingham Borough Council detailing additional street lights in Woodley that would be switched to "part-night" operation from 1 September 2014.

37. **WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL WINTER SERVICE PLAN 2014/15 CONSULTATION**

Members considered the Wokingham Borough Council draft Winter Service Plan 2014/15 and

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To make a "no comment" response to the Wokingham Borough Council draft Winter Service Plan 2014/15.

38. **SPEEDING IN COLEMANS MOOR ROAD**

Members noted that, following receipt during the summer recess of complaints from residents about speeding traffic in Colemans Moor Road, a new traffic survey was requested and was carried out by Wokingham Borough Council.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note the results summary of the speed survey carried out in Colemans Moor Road by Wokingham Borough Council.

39. **BUS SHELTER IN FAIRWATER DRIVE**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note that a new bus shelter had been installed in Fairwater Drive to replace the one that was damaged and subsequently removed.

40. **WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL GYPSY AND TRAVELLER LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION**

a) Members noted that a survey on Gypsy and Traveller needs in the area was circulated to Committee members during the summer recess and the replies were returned to Opinion Research Services.

b) Members considered the Wokingham Borough Council Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan Draft Options Document and

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To make a "no comment" response to the Wokingham Borough Council Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan consultation.

41. **WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL LOCAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY CONSULTATION**

Members considered the Wokingham Borough Council Local Flood Risk Management draft document and

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To reply to the consultation with the following comments:
  - The Committee recommended that attention should be paid to the Environment Agency Flood Plain Map when determining planning applications.
  - Attention should also be paid to comments from local residents regarding flooding events when determining planning applications.

42. **AIR QUALITY IN WOODLEY**

Members noted that Erica Taylor, Wokingham Borough Council Environmental Health Officer, was unable to attend this meeting and would attend the next meeting of the Community Services Committee, on 11 November 2014, to provide an update on air quality matters in the borough.

43. **SITE OF THE FORMER FOSTERS CARE HOME**

Members noted the information that a planning application had been submitted for the redevelopment of the former Fosters Care Home to provide an extra care housing scheme for the elderly and commented that they were very pleased to see these plans and that the proposals were a positive development for this site.

44. **2015/16 BUDGET**

The Chairman invited the committee to consider items to be included or excluded from the 2015/16 budget, which would be investigated and reported back to the committee.

Under this item the Town Clerk informed the meeting that she would be looking into the events budget to cover some of the cost of the Civic reception for the Citizens Awards Ceremony.

45. **2014/15 BERKSHIRE RECORDERS / BERKSHIRE LOCAL NATURE PARTNERSHIP CONFERENCE**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ Not to send a representative to the Berkshire Recorders/Berkshire Local Nature Partnership conference on 27 September 2014.

46. **PUBLICATIONS/INFORMATION**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note receipt of the following:
  - *Swan Lifeline Newsletter – Summer 2014*
  - *Reading Family Aid Newsletter – June 2014*
  - *Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre Newsletter – Summer 2014*
  - *Optalis Newsletter – June 2014*

- *Wokingham Volunteer Centre Newsletter – Summer 2014*
- *Historic Towns Forum Newsletter – August 2014*
- *Woodley TCMI Newsletter – August 2014*

47. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

The following items were requested by Members:

- An update from Wokingham Borough Council about when the damaged traffic island in Headley Road, outside the Oakwood Centre, would be repaired.
- Consideration of the replacement of the small “No Right Turn” sign with a larger sign at the exit of the Marks and Spencers car park onto the A4.

48. **PUBLICITY/WEBSITE**

It was suggested that links could be provided on the Town Council website to the following organisations:

- Readibus, and other operators
- Wokingham volunteer Centre
- The organisations to which the Town Council gives annual grants.

The following item was notified to Members after the agenda had been published.

49. **TELECOMMUNICATIONS INSTALLATION UPGRADES**

Members noted correspondence received from Vodaphone Ltd and CTIL regarding a proposed upgrade to the existing telecommunications installation at the grassed highway verge on Woodlands Avenue and

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To reply with no objections to the proposed upgrade to the telecommunications installation at the grassed highway verge on Woodlands Avenue.

The following item had been requested by the Community Services Committee at the previous meeting but had not been included on the agenda.

50. **PUBLIC TOILET**

The Town Clerk provided a verbal update on the progress of work to provide a public toilet in the town centre. Members were informed that the tenders had been returned and had been considered by the Public Toilets Working Party and a recommendation would be made on the preferred supplier to the Strategy and Resources Committee. There had also been an informal meeting with the nominated preferred supplier to discuss their product and this supplier was currently working on detailed proposals for the three sites under consideration. The potential sites were in the centre of the precinct and two in the car park next to Waitrose. The number of toilets provided would depend on the location.

The meeting closed at 9:30 pm

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Chairman