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THE "CALL IN" PERIOD FOR THIS SET OF MINUTES ENDS AT 12 NOON ON MONDAY, 9 NOVEMBER 2009. MINUTE NOS. 84, 85, 86, 87 AND 93 ARE NOT SUBJECT TO "CALL-IN"

SOUTHPORT AREA COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, SOUTHPORT ON WEDNESDAY 28TH OCTOBER, 2009

PRESENT: Councillor M Fearn (in the Chair)
Councillors B Rimmer, Bigley, Booth, Brodie -
Browne, Byrom, Dodd, Lord Fearn, Glover, Hands,
T Jones, McGuire, Pearson, Porter, D Rimmer,
Shaw, Sumner, Tattersall, Sir Ron Watson and
Weavers
Local Advisory Group Members:
Mr. J.Fairhurst, Mr. I. Goley and
Mr. S. Sugden

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Parry
Inspector G.Fairbrother and Inspector N. Moss,
Merseyside Police
23 members of the public in attendance.

78. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Preston and Local Advisory Group Member Mrs. M. Pointon.

79. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

80. MINUTES

The Committee considered the Minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2009.

In connection with Minute No. 76(a) - (Open Forum question re: mosquito devices), Local Advisory Group Member, Mr. I. Goley, indicated that no reference was made in the minute regarding the Committee's request that the log be produced of when the mosquito devices were used.

In connection with Minute No. 74(2)(b) - (re-phasing of traffic lights and re-modelling of junction) Councillor Shaw sought clarification on the exact location of the traffic lights and junction referred to.

RESOLVED: That subject to:

- (a) Minute No. 76(a) being amended to reflect the fact that a request was made to produce the log book of when the mosquito devices were operational; and

- (b) Minute No. 74(2)(b) being amended to identify the location of the junction referred to as the A570/A59 junction, Ormskirk

the Minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2009 be confirmed as a correct record.

81. BUDGET MONITORING

Further to Minute No. 68 of 30 September 2009, the Committee considered the report of the Planning and Economic Regeneration Director indicating that the balance of the budget available for allocation during 2009/10, including sums set aside for the provision of litterbins, was as follows:

Ward	Available Funds £
Ainsdale	9,260.58
Birkdale	16,171.18
Cambridge	8,795.83
Dukes	14,920.28
Kew	4,331.29
Meols	11,817.25
Norwood	20,514.84
Town-wide	2,812.50
Total	88,623.75

Details of the allocations made by each ward against the general provision in the current year were set out in the report.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the remaining balance of £88,623.75 of the budget available for further allocation for the rest of the year be noted; and
- (2) the following allocations be approved:

Scheme	Ward	Amount £
Additional Street Signs	Ainsdale	1,010
Additional Street Signs	Cambridge	640
Additional Street Signs	Dukes	2,185
Additional Street Signs	Meols	330
Additional Street Signs	Norwood	2,185

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Provision of a litter bin on Scarisbrick New Road by the bus stop near to the petrol filling station by the Kew roundabout	Kew	210
Provision of litter bin next to the bus stop outside 62 Marshside Road	Meols	210
Provision of a "No Ball Games" sign on the gable end of 13 Fernley Road	Kew	40
Purchase of six four person tents and cooking equipment for the 11th Kew Woods Scout Pack	Kew	800
Provision of street sign - Bank Nook (off Radnor Drive)	Cambridge	85
Underwriting of a potential deficit associated with the Birkdale Traders Christmas Lights switch on on 3 December 2009	Birkdale	250
Underwriting of a potential deficit associated with the Birkdale Traders Christmas Lights switch on on 3 December 2009	Dukes	250

82. OVERVIEW OF YOUTH PROVISION ACROSS SEFTON

Further to Minute No. 40 of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services) held on 22 September 2009, the Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director of Children's Services, which provided information regarding the provision of youth opportunities for the young people of Sefton by geographical area. The report outlined the following:

- Targeted Provision and Partnership Working;
- Targeted Youth Support and Children and Young People aged 8-19;
- Family Intervention Project; and
- Parent Know How Directory.

Appendix 1 to the report set out an overview of Youth Provision Activity across Sefton.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had approved the report and referred it to the Council's Area Committees for discussion.

RESOLVED:

That the report on the overview of youth provision across Sefton be noted.

83. PROGRESS AND ACTION ON PLANNING SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS

Further to Minute No. 160 of 22 April 2009, the Committee considered the report of the Planning and Economic Regeneration Director outlining the recent spending of monies received through Section 106 Planning Agreements made under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for the provision of tree planting and green space in Southport and setting out details of further similar schemes.

The report also detailed the concerns raised by the Planning Committee at its meeting held on 16 September 2009 relating to the current financial situation. This had had a significant impact on the number of planning applications submitted and the number of commencements on site which, in turn, would mean that there would be far less commuted sums available in the future and placed a greater focus on how money was spent.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the progress on the recent spending on tree planting and public open spaces and information on the forthcoming schemes which will generate further funds for this purpose, as set out in the report, be noted;
- (2) the recommendations for tree planting and public green space, as set out in the report, be approved; and
- (3) the detailed list of new tree planting in Southport, as set out in the report, be noted.

84. PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN REFUGES - BISPHAM ROAD SOUTHPORT AND COASTAL ROAD AINSDALE

The Committee considered the report of the Planning and Economic Regeneration Director seeking approval for the installation of pedestrian refuges on the Coastal Road, Ainsdale and Bispham Road, Southport; and seeking the introduction of a Traffic Regulation Order in order to facilitate the pedestrian refuge at Bispham Road.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Traffic Regulation Order, as shown on the plan at Annex C and as detailed in the report, be approved;

- (2) the Traffic Services Manager be authorised to undertake the necessary legal procedures, including those of public consultation and advertising the Council's intention to implement the Order; and
- (3) subject to a positive outcome from the public consultation, the design and implementation of the pedestrian refuges on the Coastal Road, Ainsdale and Bispham Road, Southport be progressed as soon as possible.

85. MONITORING OF TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS

The Committee considered the report of the Planning and Economic Regeneration Director setting out details of current Traffic Regulation Orders in the Southport area which had been approved for implementation.

RESOLVED:

That the report on the monitoring of Traffic Regulation Orders be noted.

86. SCARISBRICK NEW ROAD SOUTHPORT - OBJECTIONS TO TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER

Further to Minute No. 53 of 2 September 2009, the Committee considered the report of the Planning and Economic Regeneration Director advising of the receipt of objections to the proposed 'At Any Time' waiting restrictions on Scarisbrick New Road adjacent to the new pedestrian refuge in the vicinity of 23 Scarisbrick New Road.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the objections to the 'At Any Time' waiting restrictions be noted;
- (2) the proposed Traffic Regulation Order to introduce 50 metre sections of 'At Any Time' restrictions on both sides of Scarisbrick New Road be progressed as originally advertised as an integral part of the approved local safety scheme; and
- (3) the objectors be advised accordingly.

87. WIGHT MOSS WAY SOUTHPORT - NEW ACCESS ROAD - PROPOSED TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER

The Committee considered the report of the Planning and Economic Regeneration Director seeking approval for the introduction of Prohibition of Driving Traffic Regulation Orders, the effect of which would prohibit the driving of vehicles, with an exemption for buses, taxis and cycles, on the full length of the new link road extension to Wight Moss Way, Southport.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Traffic Regulation Orders, as set out on the plans and as detailed in the report, be approved; and
- (2) the necessary legal procedures, including those of public consultation and advertising the Council's intention to implement the Orders, be approved.

88. PLAY BUILDER PROGRAMME 2009/10 - BOTANIC GARDENS AND BEDFORD PARK

The Committee considered the report of the Leisure Director advising of the second phase of the Council's Play Builder Programme 2009/10; and in particular relating to the proposed works planned for Botanic Gardens and Bedford Park, Southport.

The report indicated that the Council's Play Builder Project Plan, submitted to the Department for Children, Schools and Families, set out how Sefton would provide innovative and stimulating play equipment and landscaping that would facilitate physically active play opportunities for all children, but with particular focus on 8-13 year olds; that whilst the designs for the two parks were currently work in progress, the style of landscaping and type of play structures typically would include:

- landscaped mounding with specimen rocks
- a mixed range of trees and shrubs
- grassed surfacing
- innovative play structures integrated into the landscape
- some original design elements

The report concluded that the works would be tendered in November with a view to a start on site by January 2010; that the landscaping works and play equipment installation would need to be completed by 31 March 2010, and that following a 'settling-in' period, an official opening would be organised in May/June 2010.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed play areas as part of the second phase of Play Builder works at Botanic Gardens, Southport and Bedford Park, Birkdale, be approved.

89. PREVIOUS QUESTIONS RAISED IN THE OPEN FORUM

The Committee considered correspondence relating to the above.

With reference to the letters from the Environmental Protection Director to Mr. Fairhurst and from the Legal Director to the Chief Executive of Network Rail concerning graffiti, Councillor Sumner, in his capacity as a member of the Merseyside Passenger Transport Authority, updated the Committee on issues relating to graffiti and litter removal on rail land/premises. Councillor Sumner advised the Committee of:

- a meeting held at Merseytravel to discuss issues of the Community Payback Team undertaking litter clearance/graffiti removal
- that he had contacted the Rail Services Committee to discuss issues about rolling stock capacity to cope when events such as the Southport Air Show and Flower Show took place
- engineering works that took place this year that caused problems relating to the Southport Air Show
- the operation of Merseyrail's own graffiti removal team
- the intention to provide Northern Rail with a list of major events taking place in Southport next year in the hope that engineering works can be scheduled to avoid clashes with such events

Members commented on their mixed experiences with Northern Rail and concluded that continual chasing of the operator was required to ensure progress

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the correspondence be noted;
- (2) the Legal Director be requested to again write to Northern Rail to ascertain whether representatives of the company would be willing to make a presentation to the Area Committee; and
- (3) Councillor Sumner be thanked for his efforts in trying to resolve graffiti/litter problems associated with the rail network.

90. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service be requested to make a presentation to the Area Committee on the work they undertake within the community; and
- (2) Dr. Phil Smith be requested to make a presentation to the Area Committee on the ecological aspects of Weld Road beach.

91. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the next ordinary meeting be held on **Wednesday, 6 January 2010, at Southport Town Hall, Lord Street, Southport, commencing at 6.30 p.m.**; and

- (2) it be noted that a special meeting will be held on **Wednesday, 18 November 2009 at the Town Hall, Lord Street, Southport, commencing at 6.30 p.m.** to consider the single issue of the Southport Cycle Town East-West Link proposals.

92. POLICE ISSUES

Members of the public/Councillors raised the following issues:

- a question was asked about what Merseyside Police did to engage with secondary school children via their schools. Inspector Moss indicated that the Police Service had a dedicated Schools Officer who went into schools to talk about issues such as anti-social behaviour and knife crime etc.; within the Southport area each secondary school had a dedicated officer who visited the school with a P.C.S.O.; that visits were frequently made to schools as part of pupil's personal, social education lessons; and that he had recently attended Stanley High School for a period of two days as part of a community cohesion event
- how safe was Coronation Walk at weekends? Inspector Fairbrother indicated that the rate of violent crime in Southport was very low, and that there were less violent offences this year compared to last year; that Southport had a vibrant night time economy and as such there was always scope for alcohol related crimes to be committed; however, the Police took robust action against those premises where crime and disorder occurred and referred to three recent examples where licensing reviews of town centre establishments had been undertaken. Inspector Moss indicated that the perception of crime was worse than the reality
- Various Members indicated that they had been on patrol with the Police on weekend evenings and that it was a very educational experience; and a question was asked whether Liverpool City Centre was safer than Southport Town Centre. Inspector Fairbrother indicated that both locations were very safe
- the Police were praised for their Beachsafe Campaign which proved very successful in tackling underage drinking and alcohol related anti-social behaviour; and thanks were extended to the Police for their role in the initiative
- information was requested on the future role of Police Community Support Officers; reference was made to comments by the Metropolitan Police Commissioner that on the spot fines were not working, that 80% of such fines were allegedly not paid, and general statistics were requested on the numbers of on the spot fines issued in Sefton and the numbers that were actually paid. Inspector Moss indicated that he would endeavour to provide such statistics

- the increasing problem of dog fouling in the Linaker Street area was referred to. Inspector Moss indicated that his staff worked closely with the Environmental Protection Department on this issue; and that he would ask his colleagues to pay particular attention to the Linaker Street area
- vehicles were being driven over the footpath by the pedestrian crossing at Hoghton Street. Inspector Fairbrother indicated that a scheme to drop the kerbs at this location was being considered; that drivers were allowed to access their premises at this location; and that no enforcement action was being considered
- officers were deployed from Southport to Liverpool to take part in the Rhys Jones murder investigation. Have those officers now returned to Southport? Inspector Moss indicated that he would report back to the next meeting on this issue following consultation with his Area Commander
- reference was made to policing in the Town Centre during the evening. Comments were made that there should be a bigger Police presence; that the Police acted reactively to situations rather than proactively; and that 'pressure points' should be policed more robustly by siting vehicles at such locations. Inspector Fairbrother indicated that Police Officers could not be statically sited in every location; that resources needed to be spread out across the Town Centre; and that two vehicles patrolled the Town Centre every weekend
- it was suggested that the 24 hour licensing regime had been a failure; that a review was to be established but that no agreement had yet been reached on the criteria of such review; that seaside towns may be omitted from such a review; and that strong representations would need to be made on this issue
- could we cut the licensing hours of all premises back to 12.00 midnight? Inspector Moss indicated that it was not within the Police's sphere of influence to do this, but that reviews were sought of premises licenses where crime and disorder was problematic. Councillor Bigley, in his capacity as Chair of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee, indicated that the Committee worked very closely with the Police and that Licensing Sub-Committees imposed strong conditions on premises to alleviate problems being experienced by both the Police and local communities

93. OPEN FORUM

During the Open Forum the following questions/comments/petitions were submitted:

- (a) Ms. D. Brannan asked for the results of the recent consultation exercise for the proposed traffic restrictions on Portland Street and the surrounding areas, namely the numbers of those residents who voted yes

or no. Ms. Brannan continued that if the majority was no, then could the Committee confirm that they would not be going ahead with the proposal. Ms. Brannan also indicated that it was not made clear that the literature delivered to residents was a consultation, as all that was on the ballot form was a comment box; and that some members of the public had been informed that the comments would be used and that the vote would not count, thus the public were misinformed that a yes/no vote would mean the majority vote carried.

Ms. Brannan concluded by asking:

- could the Committee confirm that the vote carried more influence than the comments; and
- requested that when the issue was debated, any votes on the matter be recorded so the electorate could ascertain which way their local Councillor voted.

Ms. Brannan was advised that the results of the consultation exercise would be reported to the Special Meeting of the Area Committee to be held on 18 November, 2009.

(b) Further to Minute No. 39(c) of 1 July 2009, Local Advisory Group Member Mrs. M. Pointon referred to the condition of the former Ribble Buildings on Lord Street; and requested an update on when repairs/improvements may be undertaken at the premises.

Mr. P. Cowley, Principal Solicitor, had advised Mrs. Pointon that the current position with regard to the Ribble Buildings was that on 9 October 2009, the Council had served on the owners of the building a Notice under Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990(the Act). The Notice would take effect 28 days after service (subject to any appeal being made) and the owners had three months to comply with the requirements of the Notice; and that there were nine requirements which included removing plant growth; re-painting metalwork; re-instating glass to verandah and fanlight; replacing broken windows; removing graffiti and fly posting; and painting the boarded windows. No response to the Notice had yet been received from the owners of the building.

If the owners did not comply with the requirements of the Notice within the compliance period, then they may be prosecuted for an offence under Section 216 of the Act and that if convicted, they may be liable to a fine of up to £1,000.

(c) Mr. M. Swift indicated that we were in an extraordinary financial climate and that the Council faced many financial challenges in 2010. He asked would elected Members consider leadership to the community and reduce their expenses, allowances and the costs of local democracy by one third. Mr. Swift suggested that this could be achieved by local political parties taking a decision that elected Members who retired by rotation in

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May 2010 did not stand again and that new candidates were not offered in the next round of elections.

Members made the following comments in response to the question:

- allowing a third of Councillors to drop-off as suggested would be unconstitutional and illegal
- agreed that allowances/expenses was currently a very contentious issue
- reduction in number of Councillors per ward would generate greater workloads, Councillors undertake roles on a part-time basis; lots more pressure on time
- could potentially move to four yearly elections and one Member Wards, but would have to be done constitutionally
- four yearly elections would provide more stability and improved strategic planning
- single Member Wards may lead to full-time Councillors which may have increased financial consequences
- an empty chair policy, i.e. by not fielding candidates in 2010 may allow parties like the BNP to have a 'free ride' onto the Council, this would be very dangerous

(d) Mr. D. Jackson indicated that the Seafront Loop formed part of the proposals to develop a high quality cycle network around the seafront area and improve access to the town centre and Sefton coast; that the segregated two-way segregated cycle route on Fairway was completed in May 2009; and that keep right arrow signs had been used at the two points where there was off road access to premises.

Mr. Jackson continued that the Traffic Signs Manual stated that the bollard should be plain with a nearside sign number 955 (circular sign, blue background with white pedal cycle design) to indicate that the route was for cyclists only. The Manual also stated specifically that a keep right sign should not be used as the instruction applied to cyclists as well as other traffic.

In July 2009, an elected Member informed Technical Services Department that the use of the signs was wrong as it meant cyclists could not use the segregated cycle route as the signs applied to cyclists.

In August 2009, Technical Services Department staff agreed with Merseyside Police Traffic Management staff that these signs should not be used and they would be replaced.

Mr. Jackson concluded that it was now nearly November 2009 (some six months after completion of the route) and the signs were still in place. On a none technical view, the base of the bollard only needed to be rotated through 90 degrees to rectify the problem of the keep right arrow; and asked when could what appeared to be a simple piece of work be carried out, so cyclists could lawfully use the route.

Mr. D. Marrin, Traffic Services Manager, indicated that Mr. Jackson was correct; that he (Mr. Marrin) had contacted Capita about this problem some time ago; and that he would investigate the matter further and respond in writing to Mr. Jackson.

(e) Mr. S. Taylor referred to articles in both the local newspapers about the need for cost savings by the Council and requested an update on the actions taken and the amounts saved.

RESOLVED:

That the Transformation Director be requested to respond in writing to Mr. Taylor.

(f) Mr. L. Stafford indicated that due to the noise from Southport Skip Hire, he had to move out of his home in Montgomery Avenue and rent a home further away as the noise was affecting his health.

The tenant in his old home was now complaining to him about the continual noise levels from the above company. After many calls to Environmental Health on Council advice Mr. Stafford started a petition and received hundreds of signature and the petition was then submitted to John Pugh MP and as of yet no action seemed to have been taken. Environmental Health had monitored the site but it seemed that every time monitoring started the noise stopped, only to start again when monitoring ceased. Mr. Stafford alleged that it seemed like someone was informing the company or its staff had a sixth sense.

Meanwhile the mound at the site was getting higher, well above the level that residents were informed that the company was allowed and that the dust clouds continued coating cars and houses.

Mr. Stafford concluded by asking if anything was ever going to be done about the problem.

Members indicated that a 150 signature petition had been submitted to the Environmental Protection Director complaining about the activities at Southport Skip Hire; that some residents were currently completing incident logs about the activities at the site; and residents were urged to gather as much evidence as possible to provide a strong case and secure convictions.

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- (1) the current investigations/monitoring by residents and the Environmental Protection Director be noted; and
- (2) the Planning and Economic Regeneration Director be requested to investigate the activity at the site to ascertain whether action can be taken under Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

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