

# WITHAM LOCAL COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Date:** 17<sup>th</sup> July 2007

**Meeting Started:** 7.15pm.

**Meeting Ended:** 9.50 pm

**Venue:** Public Hall, Collingwood Road, Witham

**Local Chairman:** Cllr T J W Foster

**Contact Point for further information:** Sharon Lowe, Head of Law & Governance

## Membership Present:

Councillor J E Abbott	Yes	Councillor Mrs S A Howell	Yes
Councillor Miss L Barlow	Yes	Councillor P J Hughes	Yes
Councillor D L Bebb	Yes	Councillor M C M Lager	Yes
Councillor K E Bigden	Apologies	Councillor S J Lambourne	Apologies
Councillor J G J Elliott	Yes	Councillor A M Meyer	Yes
Councillor Dr R L Evans	Yes	Councillor R G S Mitchell	No
Councillor T J W Foster	Yes	Councillor Mrs J M Money	Yes
Councillor Mrs M E Galione	Yes	Councillor R Ramage	No
Councillor J E B Gyford	Yes	Councillor W Rose	Yes

## 11. Declarations of Interest.

Councillor M CM Lager and Councillor Miss L Barlow each declared a personal interest in the report relating to the provision of a cycleway in Witham as there are both members of Witham Town Council.

## 12. Minutes

The minutes of meetings held on 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2007 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**ACTION:** In relation to Minute reference 10 of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2007 Cllr R Walters, the Cabinet Member for Environment and Sustainability was requested to attend the next meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> September to report back to the Witham and Coggeshall members at the earliest opportunity on (1) the County Council proposals; (2) why this proposal was not part of the original application and (3) what the District Council's arrangements are for developing a

waste strategy.

**13. Public Question Time.**

The following members of the public addressed the Committee in respect of the report relating to the place of worship at Maltings Lane, Witham:-

Tim Jones,  
Anne Goold,  
Reverend Michael Childs

A copy of the question(s)/statement(s) made have been kept on file and are available on request.

**14. Question & Answer Session – “Going Local – what does it mean and how will we achieve it?”**

Michele Jones, the Braintree Locality Manager opened the session with a presentation (copy available on Council website under Witham Local Committee – 17<sup>th</sup> July 2007). This was followed by a number of questions and statements made by both members of the public and members of the Committee.

**RESOLVED:** The Committee decided that the topic for the next Question & Answer Session would be on Anti-Social Behaviour.

**ACTION:**

- (1) To forward Mr Ollenbottle’s comments regarding parking on grass verges in Witham to the Head of Street Scene for action and comment.  
(NB. The Committee will be considering a report on trial enforcement of “no parking” on grass verges at its meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> September.)
- (2) To develop and produce a communications strategy to ensure maximum participation by all sectors of the community.
- (3) To invite Cllr Schmitt, the Cabinet Member for Public Protection and Healthy Living to the next meeting to be held on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2007, to answer questions relating to Anti-Social Behaviour in the Witham Locality.

**15. Better Place to Live, Work and Play: Place of Worship at Maltings Lane, Witham.**

The Head of Asset Management presented his report and drew the Committee’s attention to the selection criteria previously agreed.

**RESOLVED:** The Committee decided to:

- (1) amend the selection criteria so as to include the provision of a community facility.

(2)select Bethel as the preferred occupier for the place of worship and the community facility subject to further clarification and negotiations with the Head of Asset Management.

**ACTION:** That the Head of Asset Management enter into further discussions with Bethel to clarify a number of issues that were raised by the Committee (see below) and to report back to the Committee by 11<sup>th</sup> September 2007.

Issues to be clarified:-

- How will the facility be managed for all aspects of the community to enjoy?
- What guarantees will Bethel give to ensure that other organisations will have reasonable access to the facilities?
- What area is the site intended to serve?
- Further detail on timescales for the project required
- Greater clarity needed on the financing arrangements

**16. Clean and Greener District: Provision of a cycleway in Witham.**

The Planning Policy Manager presented her report and produced photographs to the Committee.

A motion to adopt the officer's recommendation was moved and seconded but there was a subsequent amendment to reduce the width of the cycleway/footway from 3.0 metres to 2.5 metres but this was lost when put to vote.

**RESOLVED:** Subject to the following conditions, the Committee agreed to the construction of a segregated 3.0 metre wide cycleway/footway with lighting and a textured and coloured surfacing between Town End Field and Dengie Close, Witham:-

- That the replacement trees referred to in the report be of a good/robust standard with the provision of guards to prevent vandalism;
- That the replacement lighting be to the same specification as set out in the report and that consideration be given to the hours of lighting; and
- No lighting to be installed along the River Walk

**17. Local Priorities**

The Committee were referred to a summary paper of the issues, which covered matters raised by constituents during the election period (attached as an appendix). The Chairman suggested that a small group of members look at this paper and produce a small

action plan for consideration at the next meeting. The Committee concurred with this approach and volunteers were sought.

**RESOLVED:** The Committee agreed that the following Members should meet and produce an action plan:-

Cllr A Meyer  
Cllr J Elliott  
Cllr Miss L Barlow  
Cllr P Hughes

**ACTION:** Head of Law & Governance/Locality Co-Ordinator to liaise and support Members with this task so that a report can be available for the next meeting.

## **18. Choice Based Lettings**

Tim Lucas, the Housing Research and Development Manager gave a presentation to explain what housing services were being retained post transfer and how the Choice Based Lettings Scheme operated. Afterwards the Members asked a number of questions and thanked the officer for his presentation.

**RESOLVED:** The Committee noted the presentation.

**ACTION:**

- (1) The Housing Research and Development Manager to make the slides available via Member Focus
- (2) The Member Services Manager to record that the Members present at this meeting received training for a period of 20 minutes on Choice Based Lettings.

## **19. Information**

Members were advised that there would be a delay in issuing this documentation as an information audit was required before any further information could be issued.

**ACTION:** The Locality Management Team to conduct an information audit at the earliest possible opportunity and in any event before the end of the current civic year.

## **20. Future Items**

The Committee were referred to section 5 of the Agenda regarding item for the next meeting.

**RESOLVED:** The items set out in 5.1 of the Agenda were noted.

T J W FOSTER(CHAIRMAN)

**WITHAM LOCAL COMMITTEE – 17<sup>th</sup> JULY 2007**  
**AGENDA ITEM 2.1 – LOCAL PRIORITIES**

Members were invited to submit upto three issues that were raised by constituents during the election period. A number of Members responded and these issues have been listed below under a theme and where possible also linked to one of the Council's corporate priorities.

Summary of Issues

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Corporate Priority</b>	<b>Local Issue</b>
<b>Anti-Social Behaviour</b>	Reduce anti-social behaviour – particularly focusing on youth nuisance, town centres and urban areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti social behaviour, especially in Witham Town Centre at night.</li> <li>• Lack of high visibility Policing ( nighttime mainly)</li> <li>• Graffiti in the underpasses in Flora Road and Spa Road</li> <li>• Groups of youths drinking in and around the Witham Rugby Club ground</li> <li>• Broken glass on Humber Road walkways and in the Spa Road underpass</li> <li>• Vandalism to the play equipment off Spa Road</li> <li>• Difficulty in placing a response call through the Essex Police Headquarters Duty Desk ( Long wait times on the phone)</li> </ul>
Street Scene	Improving the appearance of the District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delay in obtaining a positive response from BDC to minor annoying issues such as Weed growth in kerbsides on estate roads</li> <li>• Street Light failures around estates and school</li> <li>• General litter ( bottles, paper etc. ) on estates</li> <li>• Parking on verges in Redwood Close</li> </ul>

Theme	Corporate Priority	Local Issue
Roads and Traffic		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic and speeding. Speed limits are ignored in some places and in Faulkbourne a 40mph speed limit would be welcomed between Faulkbourne village and Witham.</li> <li>• Adoption of the roads at Black Notley Hospital site</li> <li>• The parking restrictions in Kelvedon High Street and Feering Hill which prohibits parking for one hour every morning. This was designed to prevent rail commuters from parking but it catches residents out and a number of them would welcome a permit holder scheme.</li> <li>• The poor state of repair and lack of passing bays in Brockwell Lane, Kelvedon. This is an unadopted road but BDC is, I believe, responsible for it.</li> <li>• Traffic around Witham station (routing, abuse of residents' parking zone)</li> <li>• Parking in Witham town centre (provision, pricing, policing especially after 7pm and in Guithavon Street, more than a single zone for residents' parking, parking on grass in The Avenue, Witham)</li> <li>• HGV routing and signage through Witham</li> <li>• Poor condition of the road surface in the Powers Hall Road from Chipping Hill to the Spa Road roundabout</li> <li>• Potholes in Forest Road</li> </ul>

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Corporate Priority</b>	<b>Local Issue</b>
Community Engagement	Improving access by the public to information and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opposition to the Children’s Centre at Powers Hall School by residents of Powers Hall Road</li> <li>• Fire to the house in Yare Avenue, cause not made aware to residents who feared concern as all houses constructed much the same should there have been an electrical fault etc.</li> <li>• Post office closures</li> </ul>
Conservation Areas		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extension of Witham town centre conservation area to include Collingwood Road and some nearby streets</li> </ul>
Regeneration		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived lack of investment in infrastructure in Witham generally eg: Shops, Leisure facilities ( Cinema ) No centre for youth activity</li> </ul>
Public Safety		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Road safety over Chipping Hill bridge, and from cars making U-turns at mini-roundabout at junction of Chipping Hill and Braintree Road to get into Albert Road</li> <li>• Hazards to pedestrians from youngsters cycling on pavements</li> </ul>