

Ely Neighbourhood Panel

Thursday 24th October 2013 Council Chamber
East Cambridgeshire District Council, Ely

PRESENT

Cllr Lis Every	City of Ely Council
Cllr Alison Arnold	City of Ely Council
Cllr Shirley Overall	City of Ely Council
Cllr John Yates	City of Ely Council
Cllr Anna Bailey	Cambridgeshire County Council
Cllr Richard Hobbs	East Cambridgeshire District Council
Cllr Mike Rouse	East Cambridgeshire District Council

OFFICERS

Jeanette Thompson	Head of Legal & Democratic Services	East Cambs. District Council
Inspector Paul Ormerod		Cambridgeshire Constabulary
John Wade	Ely Fire Station	Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service
Terry Jordan	Neighbourhood Panel Liaison Officer	Cambs County Council
Allison Conder	Principal Community and Leisure Services Officer	East Cambs. District Council
Jane Thompson	Special Projects Officer	East Cambs. District Council
Adrian Scaites-Stokes	Democratic Services Officer	East Cambs. District Council
Pauline Perry	Sanctuary Housing	

IN ATTENDANCE:

Cllr Jeremy Friend-Smith
Cllr Hazel Williams MBE
25 members of the public

ENP13/14 Welcome

Councillor Lis Every, the Panel Chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

ENP13/15 Introductions and Apologies

The Fire Notice was read out by the Democratic Services Officer.
Apologies were received from Councillors Sue Austen and Lindsey Harris.

ENP13/16 Chairman's Announcements and Consultation Items

Councillor Lis Every highlighted the items for consultation:

- Modification to the Local Plan – consultation period 4th October to 15th November.
- Supplementary Planning Document on Community Led Development – for example on Community Land trusts – consultation period 4th October to 1st November.
- North Ely Supplementary Planning Document – proposal for the north Ely development. 6 week consultation period from 28th October to 6th December.
- Cambridgeshire County Council budget priorities.
- Electoral reform – Government proposals that each individual eligible person must register themselves.

ENP13/17 Update on East Cambs District Council Actions Since Last Meeting

The Panel received a table giving an update on the actions undertaken by East Cambs District Council.

Issue and Description	Further Comments
City Centre – dirty streets near shops	The Waste team needed more details, as a routine cleansing programme was already in place and litter levels were kept to standards.
New Barns Road – fly tipping	The site was cleared weekly but extra visits had been requested.
Three Cups Walk – broken fence	The Cathedral had been informed.
The Cutter & Jubilee Gardens – litter picking	Work to clear this litter had been requested and should have been done.
Jubilee Gardens – vehicle oil	This oil had not originated from the Council's vehicles, as they underwent an annual service and were checked weekly. No signs of oil leaks had been found. Other vehicles also used the Gardens. Veolia would be asked to check their vehicles.

ENP13/18 Update on County Council Actions Since Last Meeting

The Panel received a table giving an update on the actions undertaken by the County Council.

Issue and Description	Further Comments
Market Place – lighting column	Options were being discussed about the timetable for replacements.
Lynn Road – pot holes	More information needed to pinpoint where these were.
Silver Street – speed bumps	Arrangements were being made to re-bed these humps.
High Barns – overhanging branches	In most cases these referred to private dwellings. Letters had been sent where appropriate.
Prickwillow – number of HGVs	The County Council had adopted a HCV Strategy in 2012 and this situation needed to be assessed against it.
Ely – pot holes	Maintenance ongoing.
Ely Bypass – update	Preferred option agreed. Planning application submitted. Public consultation to be undertaken. Could be called in by the Secretary of State.
Ely – road markings	Areas identified. Will be done through routine maintenance programme.
West Fen Road/A10 junction	No work to be done, as it has been checked and found to meet all design standards.
New Barns/Bentham Way – overhanging branches	Maintained by East Cambs District Council.
Kings Avenue/Springfield Road – road surface	Some issues have been rectified.
Springhead Lane – pot holes	Road had been re-surfaced.

Earlier that week the County Council had carried out a final test of the gritting fleet to ensure the equipment and drivers were ready to go when winter comes. The dry run was designed to check that the 38 gritting trucks were ready for the task ahead, with no faults, and the team of 80 drivers were familiar with the treatment routes. The run, which did not involve any of the stockpiles grit, went well and the machinery and manpower were now on standby for when the temperatures dropped and winter weather arrived. The Council had more than

10,000 tonnes of salt stockpiles across the county, with a further 6,000 tonnes in reserve. Arrangements to top up supplies as necessary were also in place.

Last year the gritting team were called into action 103 times with the runs triggered automatically by weather monitoring equipment and the routes treated are designed to keep commuter and passenger transport flowing, with secondary routes covered when resources allowed.

Salt bins, which are kept stocked by the County Council, were also available to local parishes. The County Council had also recruited and trained more than 60 volunteers across the county, who would treat agreed footways in their community with equipment and salt provided by the local authority highways team.

ENP13/19 Update on Sanctuary Housing Actions Since Last Meeting

25 new units were being built in Cathedral View. Through the Section 106 agreement 7 affordable houses would be included. These would be available for use and residents who had a link to Ely would be given priority.

The Homes Swap scheme was proving a success. This tackled the consequences of the changes to the benefits system. Over 100 people had attended an event to publicise the scheme and to enable homes to be swapped. An online database is now available with appropriate details.

ENP13/20 Update on City of Ely Council Actions Since Last Meeting

The Panel received a table and a verbal report giving an update on the actions undertaken by the City of Ely Council.

Issue and Description	Further Comments
Dovehouse Close, Forehill, New Barns, Deacons Lane, Lisle Lane, Potters Lane – parking	Car parking issues, including yellow lines, had been picked up and the City Council had met East Cambs District Council.
Market Place	An order had been put in for replacement signs.
Silver Street	An order had been placed to paint yellow lines and mark parking bays.
Ship Lane	Orders have been placed for yellow lines as part of Phase 1 to help enforce parking regulations.
Maltings Cottage	A contractor had been appointed to renovate the outside of the building and work was due to start. Discussions would be held on renovating the inside.
Court House	Specifications have been drawn up for external and internal works. Looking to accommodate the City Council offices within the building. Considering making a bid to the Heritage Lottery to help fund Phase 2.
Play Areas	St John's and Stuntney play areas have been refurbished.
City Centre Forum Working Party	Formed to help energise the city centre. First initiative – to aid the Cathedral with its upcoming fair. An Ely Christmas Shopper Bus service will be introduced from 16 th December, as a pilot scheme. Volunteers were being sought to help with CCTV, the Christmas lights and Ely In Bloom.

ENP13/21 Update on Police Actions Since Last Meeting

The Panel received a table giving an update on the actions undertaken by the Police. Priorities from the last Panel meeting were: 1) late night anti-social behaviour/night time economy; 2) parking issues and 3) speeding at identified locations.

Issue and Description	Further Comments
Late Night Anti-Social Behaviour/Night Time Economy	Routine foot patrols had been held in the city centre. As a result there had been reductions in crime and ASB. However, the incidents of reported violent crime had increased. This was probably down to officers being around to report them. No pubs in Ely had been identified as being a problem. Total crime was down. ASB reports were not linked to evening time, as ASB covered a lot of issues not expected.
Parking Issues	Forehill – numerous patrols undertaken but no offences discovered. Potters Lane – 2 penalty notices had been issued for obstruction. St Marys School – 3 drivers had been spoken to. Overall – 65 tickets issued.
Speeding At Identified Locations	A number of drivers had been caught speeding in a variety of locations including Lisle lane, Lynn Road and Cam Drive.

Other Crime Issues

Overall crime figures were lower than last year, including ASB incidents decreasing. However, there had been a spate of shed and garages broken into with tools and garden equipment stolen. Serious acquisitive crime, usually committed overnight, came in 'spikes'. Thefts from shops were expected to increase in the run up to Christmas.

A member of the public pointed out that Blue Badge holders should not be using Forehill to park, as it was not level, making access to vehicles difficult. If they then caused an obstruction then they should not park there. The Council should decide whether to allow parking there or not.

Councillor Richard Hobbs agreed that something had to be done. Councillor Lis Every thought this should be taken to the City Council as its Working Party were looking at options.

In response to public queries, the Inspector stated that taxis were allowed to park in public bays in Market Street, provided they adhered to the parking restrictions in place. The High Street was closed on Saturdays but any car parked before it was closed could legitimately park there within the parking restrictions. The Police did not have any power to move parked cars on to allow access for the Christmas lights volunteers. An application should be made to the County Council to get the road closed the previous evening.

ENP13/22 Issues raised by Audience and Panel Members

LOCATION	ISSUE OF CONCERN
Forehill disabled parking	Should people be allowed to park there with a blue badge? Needs to be looked at again but shops also need to be able to deliver!
Taxis parking in parking bays in city centre	Any conditions or restrictions within license?
Princess of wales by water tower	Fly-tipping – one sofa will encourage others!
Downham road	Speed bumps ineffective to slow down traffic from bypass. There needs to be monitoring undertaken of driver behaviour on Egremont street and changes identified for the road layout to assist with cyclist awareness
High street on Saturdays instead of 10am	Consider closing earlier at weekends and would a barrier put in at the other end help? - seek a revised closure order?
High street signs	General parking signs are not correct signs?
High street	Loading bays parking for more than 15 mins in high street
	Wheelie bins – council not being proactive with promoting assisted lifts for people who cannot manage their bins. Assisted lifts not included on literature being given out
High barns	Cycling on narrow paths a problem whole way down. Need cycle paths.
new barns road and deacons lane	Double parking at junction of new barns road and deacons lane exacerbated by market vehicles. ECDC need to look at where market vehicles are currently being encouraged to park
High street	Parking in high street in week and Saturdays, time spent and parking at angle.
St Marys school	St Marys school parking, Has improved but problem drifted to adjacent roads
Lisle Lane	Lisle Lane conservation area has a lot of banners in it (Pecks and Aldi)
Post Office High Street	Moving the post office. Current arrangements are an insult to users, invisible consultation period. No disabled parking at new location
Market Square	Regulations for pavements being used for cafes, who are doubling floor space
POLICING PRIORITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Xmas shopping policing presence, extra bobbies on beat • Parking in High Street (working with other relevant agencies)
OTHER PRIORITIES	None

ENP13/23 Presentation – North Ely Supplementary Planning Document – Public Consultation

Jane Thompson Special Projects Officer ECDC, gave a presentation on the draft Supplementary Planning Document and asked the public to consider contributing to the consultation. This Document would be used to help guide the determination of relevant planning applications.

In response to public questions, it was confirmed that the final document would be used to assess the two existing outline applications which were expected to be considered by Planning Committee in spring 2014.. It is possible that bungalows could be part of future detailed (reserved matters) applications. It was expected that facilities at the Princess of

Wales Hospital would be improved following development in north Ely. A community facility was planned in the development that may be used for worship. Anglian Water was happy in principle that the existing sewage facilities could cope with the extra demand.

ENP13/24 Presentation – Neighbourhood Panel Service Review

Allison Conder, Principal Community and Leisure Services Officer ECDC, gave an update on the service review instigated by East Cambridgeshire District Council. A review group involving all of the partner agencies and had considered performance figures and feedback from a consultation with Parish Council's in October 2012. The group had also considered the strengths and weaknesses of the Panels.

Strengths – they engaged with the public, highlighted the priorities of residents, were an effective way for the Police to deliver services, good for information sharing.

Weaknesses – attendance of the public and parish councils representatives was decreasing, issues brought up were mostly fault reporting that could be raised through other means and receive a quicker response, only 5 out of the 6 of the Terms of reference were being met, they were least valued by parish council as a way of engaging with residents, they were not cost effective for the number of residents participating.

Originally, when the Panels were set up, there were limited alternatives to public engagement but now there were many social media opportunities.

In conclusion, the Panels it will be recommended to Committee in November that all partners agree that panels are not an effective form of resident engagement and need to cease in their current format. Options would be considered how they could be evolved. In the feedback received from Parishes they had indicated that panels are valued as a way for parishes to work collaborative and perhaps could evolve into a parish forum and that Parishes themselves should be doing more to engage directly with residents. The last round of Panel meetings could therefore be in January 2014 (subject to Members approval), with the potential new forum starting in 2014/15.

Councillor Hazel Williams is Chair of the Review and stated that the Police presence was very important and had been valued at panels. There had been a lot of duplication of issues at the Panel meetings and a lot of changes to services are taking place with the City of Ely Council taking more of these on.

Inspector Ormerod, who had been part of the Review Group, noted that the way the Police engaged had been changed by the Panels. Although they were costly, consideration had to be given as to how to move forward. ShapeYourPlace is one method used but it would still be useful to have some kind of forum where the Police could check that they were doing what was wanted.

Councillor Richard Hobbs informed the Panel that the recommendation to cease would go to a District Council Committee next month. It was hoped that, thereafter, Ely City Council would take up a role of engaging more directly with residents. Councillor Lis Every stated that the City Council are currently investigating whether to continue the Panel in some form. People were encouraged to email the City Council with their views.

ENP13/25 Panel Prioritisation

Police Priorities:

- Police presence in Ely city centre over the Christmas period (as last year)
- Parking in Ely High Street

The Meeting closed at 9:07pm.