

The Orsett Community Forum

Community Meeting – 29th July 2009

Present:

G Monk
T. Pigg

M. Jackson
Cllrs M & D Revell

D. Kooyman

J. Vesey

Community Attendance stood at 88

The meeting was declared open at 19.45 The chair welcomed the residents, introduced the panel, council reps & our new NSO Pc Brian Sargent.

The chair announced that this meeting will run slightly different due to the high profile subject of the Thames Crossing Option C proposal, and will cover this first before the normal agenda.

Cheques were then presented & photos taken to the successful applicants of this year's forum budget.

They included: -

£500 to the Orsett Play Group – Matt presented the Cheque to Tracy Pigg, on behalf of the play group.

£2000 to the Orsett Parish Church Clock – Graham presented the Cheque to Richard Player on behalf of the Church.

A further £800 will be issued to the Orsett Parent & Toddler Group.

Orsett & DfT Option C

Our Ward Councillor Mr Mike Revell discussed the recent history of how Option C became the preferred route: -

In 2008 a high level report was issued to the government making recommendations for a further crossing, either at or further east of the existing Dartford/Thurrock crossing.

Previously a crossing was considered closer to London to connect the north & south circular roads, between Beckton & Woolwich. Since this was rejected further studies were carried out for suitable locations.

The 2008 report was whittled down to three options and presented to Thurrock Councillors in April 2009. These were: -

A connection to the A1089 (Dock approach road) from the south of the river.

*(option c) A 6 lane crossing east of Tilbury Power Station, from south of the river, which extends through east Tilbury, Chadwell st mary, Orsett, Bulphan and on to North Ockendon, where it joins the m25 with a new junction.

Increase capacity at the exiting Dartford/Thurrock crossing.

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A recent poll was carried out on MP Angela Smith's web site to gauge opinion. So far the results by those who have taken the poll would suggest that *(option c) would be the preferred route.

So far we are unable to quantify how many people took this poll or where they are from – being web based they could have been anywhere in the world!

Obviously many of the areas affected weren't even aware of the proposal let alone the web poll.

Therefore the Orsett Ward Councillors have carried out a simple paper based ballot to gauge opinion from within the ward. This will be presented to the stakeholders and relevant bodies. Mr Revell went on to state many of the papers have been returned, all of which oppose the option C.

The meeting was called to a show of hands of those in favour of option c.

(88 people in attendance) unanimously reject the option c proposal.

The floor was open to questions:-

Q1 - Stakeholders in favour of option c, one of the stakeholders is Thurrock.
The Director of Highways denies any formal discussion with the consultants regarding this decision. However, informal opinion may have been put forward. The question will be raised again to clarify.

Q2 – Can the tolls be abolished, as the maintenance budget was complete?
Tolls will remain! However, an electronic system like the London congestion charge could be investigated.

Q3 – Can the Ward Councillors put together a strategy to overcome this issue?
A group will be formed and meetings established shortly.

Q4 – Why has Thurrock not published this on their website, unlike Kent et al. who have all published detailed web pages on this subject? Can they update the Thurrock website to reflect & discuss the various options?
Will be investigated.

Q5 – Are we missing the bigger picture for Orsett Ward due to a proposed wind farm being installed on local fen lands?

Q6 – Can the MPs & Councillors unite on this and not point score, after all it affects us all regardless of who we vote for!

Q7 – How can a poll be published to government without firm quantified data?

A meeting will be set up for further discussions; MPs will be invited to attend as required. The civic hall was suggested as a venue big enough to cater for the numbers expected.

Normal Forum proceedings progressed.

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Budget

The forum has allocated this year's budget. Therefore any future applications will be added to next year's budget.

It was explained that the forum must spend the budget or risk a budget reduction in the following year. Orsett ward has never suffered from not allocating 100% of the budget and emphasised this should not change!

A number of application forms were issued.

Village Highways

Matt Jackson presented the councils three preferred options, which mainly included drainage upgrades & resurfacing to many of the village roads, using the Bryant S106 budget.

As this somewhat differs from what's previously been discussed the forum have forwarded the communication to our Ward Councillors to follow up.

The council engineer made a presentation at our Feb 2009 meeting that supported many of our 'wants'. However, the recent communication explained that the S.106 budget had constraints applied that prevented them from using this funding to fill our wishes.

Option 1) includes drainage works to Rowley & Rectory Roads – it was suggested that this be the preferred option. However, the S.106 funding should not be used to prop up council budget short comings.

The communication went on to say that the council were not in a position to fund such traffic calming, Orsett ranked 11th out of 25, so did not appear high enough to attract funding.

An Accident Reduction Programme (ARP) will be installed on the Orsett Cock Roundabout during August. No consultation was required as it was being installed under the ARP scheme. It will be a permanent fixture on the roundabout, however, traffic studies will be carried out to monitor its effectiveness.

This means a set of lights will control the flow of traffic coming off the A13, from Southend and traffic on the roundabout. The residents at the meeting unanimously oppose this proposal and asked our Ward Councillor to follow this issue up.

A project on the southern section of the A128 (Brentwood Road – Orsett Cock to Chadwell St Mary) was to install a number of mini roundabouts at various junctions along this stretch.

While junctions in Chadwell were installed, a number of years ago, the Welling Road/A128 junction never got installed due to the quarry works at the time. Now the works have finished in the quarry I asked the question 'when will the final mini roundabout be installed?'. To which I was told it's not on the plan for this financial year and probably wouldn't get done in the not too distant future. Again doesn't appear high on accident figures.

At the next meeting the forum will be seeking views from the residents of the bonners / beauchamps gate as to if they want to have this junction made safe!

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Police

NSO PC Brian Sargent announced to the forum that he had taken over from Nick Luff, and that he had two PCSO's working for him in the Orsett ward. He went on to explain his task to reduce shed/house burglaries and village speeding. He also mentioned that for the short term there will only be 2 PCSO's working with him in the area – when Orsett originally had 3 PCSO's. There were no short term plans to have a third PCSO on the team.

The forum asked about the Ward vehicle... Currently the team are using the shared NPT car – therefore do not always have use of a vehicle. Our Ward councillor was asked to investigate, as a forum meeting in Feb 2009 stated the police will now fund a vehicle for the area. In the mean time the PCSO's have/will undertake training on a cycle.

The forum asked if the current NSO will be subject to the same targets as our previous NSO, ie if policing targets are not met will he get moved on... PC Sargent was confident that the targets would not be a problem and would remain in the Ward for some time.

The police website>

<http://www.essex.police.uk/yourarea/>

Click on 'Thurrock' then Orsett

Pound & lockup

Funding has now been secured... However, timing for the maintenance work will be investigated as no plans have been formally issued.

Tennis Court

Funding has been secured to refurbish the village tennis court. Again no timing published and another item for the forum to follow up on.

A question regarding the use of the court once the refurb had been complete. The forum assumes the shop will look after the key, as before, as it was a fairly robust system. However, if there are any improvements/suggestions the forum is willing to investigate and consult as required.

Parish Church Clock

It was noted that Thurrock do carry out maintenance work on church clocks, as Aveley & Ockendon have both recently been refurbished by the Council. However, the budget is small and a priority system is in place. In the mean time the Orsett Church clock will be repaired with forum project money.

Bowling Club

An application from the Bowling Club was received by the forum to fund the refurbishment of their 'Honours Board'. The sum requested was ~£390.

The community were asked to take a vote on whether this should be funded.
The community unanimously agreed to fund the project.
No objections or abstentions were recorded.

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Playground

The chair advised the community that our playground had been allocated a phase 3 installation target. This means between April and July 2010 – in time for the kids 6 week holiday next year!

The forum is waiting for the official RoSPA risk assessment report to be issued by Andrea Winterflood. RoSPA carried out the risk assessment March/April 2009 to investigate site placement suitability – with respect to the proximity of school lane & the cricket wicket.

Updates will be posted to the forum website in due course. www.orsettcf.org.uk

AOB

Acquisition of the land at the eastern side of the recreation ground has begun. Talks between the cricket club, land owner agents & council are under way to progress the installation of a new cricket wicket, football pitches and all weather facilities.

Surveys have been carried out on the area to establish relocation/removal of hedgerows and to fill in a ditch.

Plans, at this stage, are very high level and require further detailed discussion. The forum will update the community & consult as required, but see this as a very good opportunity for the village in terms of recreational facilities.

Complaints to Orsett Showground were received for excessive noise after 2am on 26th July for an event that started around 10am on the 25th. Various villagers made complaints to the Environmental Health dept. with no success.

It was suggested to email / write in and make a formal complaint to the relevant council dept's & include a copy to your ward councillors.

Thurrock Council plan to roll out of 3 wheelie bins to households in the very near future. And a weekly service collection will remain. Villagers were amazed at this result based on the consultation feedback during 2008.

Meeting closed 21.40