

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet **Date:** 18 December 2007
Subject: Planning and Economic Development Portfolio
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Mrs A Grigg **Item:** 7(i)

Recommending:

That the report of the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder be noted.

Loughton Town Centre Enhancement

The lighting column manufacturer has agreed the columns are at slightly the wrong depth setting but still meet their standards. The warranty etc will still apply and the columns do not have to be reset. There will be no Christmas lights, however, as the local traders are unwilling to provide the necessary funding. We are getting closer to, but have yet to complete, sign off of the scheme.

Essex County Council is continuing to investigate the adoption of the unregistered land to allow this Council consideration to the placement of trees.

Given recent Cabinet decisions to defer phases 3 and 4, discussions have commenced with Essex County Council regarding looking at the feasibility of removing the 5th arm of the "Morrison" junction.

The Broadway Enhancement Scheme

A meeting was held with National Grid Gas on 10 December 2007. The meeting was very positive with NGG being keen to assist. However, there remain significant risks to the project arising from the location of the gas main and the method statements required to work around it. A formal risk assessment of the project is to be undertaken early in the New Year to inform Cabinet's eventual decision. NGG agreed to waive their normal £350 per day works supervision costs in the light of earlier difficulties. It is unlikely that they will cede further on costs pointing to their 'disclaimers' on stats searches.

Letters will go out very shortly to all local residents and businesses regarding the new parking controls coming into force. They will be provided with an information pack and application forms.

Bus stops

Transport for London and private companies have ceased stopping by Sainsburys in Torrington Drive and moved the stopping area to the north of Vere Road. This is causing hardship to some passengers and therefore to local shops. The County and TfL are blaming the District Council, on the basis that:

- (a) we have not provided a bus holding facility in Burton Road; and
- (b) we erected bollards in Burton Road which have prevented buses from waiting for entry to the Torrington Drive bus stops.

Point (a) is factually correct. The original TCE scheme had a provision, but in order to reduce costs this was eventually excluded from the scheme. This did not however stop the buses from parking in that location nor parking two wheels on/ two wheels off the highway in Burton Road -2 -

Point (b) is the result of action by Essex County Council. When they reconstructed Burton Road, they erected bollards to prevent the two wheels on/off parking – correctly so since the buses obstructed the footway and it was illegal in any event.

A meeting was held with ECC County Transport Officers at The Broadway. County Councillor Chris Pond was in attendance. There was no agreement by the parties regarding whose fault it all was. It was, however, decided to seek the following short and medium term solution:

- (a) Housing to allow the use of the forecourts in front of the garages for temporary stopping. This would have to be conditional upon enabling continued access to the garages and making good damage to the forecourts; and
- (b) Essex County Council constructing a formal layby more or less where it was originally planned until such time as the scoping exercise is complete and a longer term solution can be achieved. This is problematical because the layby would compromise the land allocated for affordable housing.