

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL HIGHWAYS FORUM FOR OADBY AND WIGSTON HELD AT BROCKS HILL ENVIRONMENT CENTRE, WASHBROOK LANE, OADBY ON WEDNESDAY 10 OCTOBER 2007 AT 6.35PM

PRESENT

County Councillors	Borough Councillors
Mr A P Natzel (Chairman)	Mr J Kaufman
Mr G A Boulter	Mr K J Loydall
Mr M H Charlesworth	Mr M Carrara
Mr D A Gamble	Mrs J M Gore

The following also attended the meeting:

County Officers present: I Drummond, K Notman, M Hay, N Rowe, I Grierson, C Howe, S Karkowski, D R Bradbury

Borough Officer present: M Hibbitt

250. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Members and Officers to the Forum meeting.

251. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr M Griffiths CC and Mr J W Boyce BC.

252. URGENT ITEMS

There were no items of urgent interest.

253. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr D A Gamble CC declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda items 7b/8.

254. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 4th July 2007 were confirmed and signed as a true record of the meeting.

Mr G A Boulter CC asked that the minutes note that two actions from the previous meeting had not been fully completed:

238 (iii) that officers speak to Mr Boulter to discuss why a tree was removed at Guthlaxton College after work had been completed.

243 (ii) that officers speak to Mr Boulter and Mr Loydall on street lighting columns Repton Road.

Mr Bradbury agreed to ask officers to contact Mr Boulter and Mr Loydall.

255. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE ON ISSUES CONSIDERED AT THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chairman confirmed that the update covered four issues previously discussed and asked officers to update Members.

i) Highways Services Efficiency Review

Mrs Notman gave an update to Members. She commenced by introducing Mr Ian Drummond the new Assistant Director, Transportation who was replacing Mr Holden.

She confirmed that the review has progressed since the last meeting and that she has been appointed Southern Area Manager with the two Southern Area Team Managers being Mr Clive Howe (who she introduced) appointed to Team Manager for Harborough and Oadby and Wigston and Mr Ian Grierson Team Manager for Blaby and Hinckley and Bosworth. Both area teams are to be based at Croft with a gradual handover commencing 1st November. It is planned that the new arrangements will officially be in place in the New Year.

ii) Highway Tree Planting

Mrs Notman, in response to a Member request, read out the planned tree planting locations for 2007/8. Mrs Notman agreed to ask officers to contact Mr J Kaufman BC to discuss the removal of trees in the centre of Coombe Rise and their replacement.

She also agreed to ask officers to contact Mr M Carrara BC on the subject of replacement trees Ashtree Road/Briar Walk.

Finally Mrs Notman agreed to ask officers to contact Mr Boulter to confirm when trees are to be replaced Timber Street/Bassett Street South Wigston.

iii) Petition request for alternative traffic calming measures Rosemead Drive Oadby

Mr Hay explained to Members that it had not been possible to bring a full report to this meeting as traffic surveys, which could not take place in the summer holidays due to the reduction in traffic, had been requested as part of the assessment. A full response will be provided at the next forum meeting.

iv) Roundabout Sponsorship update

Mr Grierson updated Members on the present position of the roundabouts sponsored in the borough.

In answer to a question on the possibility of research undertaken looking at whether sponsorship signs could contribute to accidents. Mr Grierson explained that he was not aware of any research available. Signs on roundabouts needed to be erected in places that publicise the sponsor but not in places where they would distract the motorist.

Mr Grierson confirmed that the roundabout on Welford Road by the cemetery was not sponsored at present. He also agreed to feed back to the consultants concerns raised over the monies received and the level of maintenance undertaken.

Mrs Notman confirmed that sponsors' monies committed the consultants to 26 maintenance visits per season.

256. PETITION TO IMPROVE EXITS ON LAUNCESTON ROAD AND HORSEWELL LANE

The Chairman asked Mr M H Charlesworth to present the petition asking that the County Council undertake to improve the exits on Launceston Road and Horsewell Lane.

Mr Charlesworth explained that this is a long running problem with the exits into the Little Hill Estate, which are the main bus routes through South Wigston. The result is that there is a great level of congestion. He went on to say that one of the objectives in LTP2 is the reduction of congestion. The petition contained 168 signatures signifying the amount of concern of residents. He suggested that officers look at mini roundabouts at Launceston Road and Horsewell Lane as possible solutions.

Mr Boulter and Mrs J M Gore BC both supported Mr Charlesworth and confirmed that the problem was one also of a safety nature with buses mounting the kerb. Officers agreed to review the situation and report back to the Forum and the petitioners.

257. PETITION: REQUEST FOR THE REMOVAL OF PARKING RESTRICTIONS IN STATION STREET, SOUTH WIGSTON

The Chairman asked Mr Boulter to present the petition. At this point Mr Gamble left the room. Mr Boulter explained that the problem occurred when Civil Parking Enforcement was introduced with local residents receiving penalty charge notices for exceeding the 30 minute restriction. The matter had been resolved after consultation with Mr Holden and the suspension of the limited waiting restriction. Mr Boulter asked that officers leave the situation as it is at present with no enforcement. He highlighted similar problems in Timber Street and Bassett Street.

The Forum considered a report by the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste Management on the petition. The report was introduced by Mr Rowe with a copy filed with the minutes.

Mr Rowe explained that the waiting restriction had been suspended in order to monitor the situation with a view to formally revoking the traffic regulation order. He went on to say that requests for residents parking schemes in South Wigston including Bassett Street and Canal Street were being investigated.

Mr Boulter confirmed that a resident parking scheme in Marstown Avenue was working very well and highlighted extra problems incurred with workers at the biscuit factory and the possible future problem that may arise if the planning application on the corner of Canal Street is agreed. He urged early action on the resident parking scheme before the situation worsened.

In answer to a question Mr Rowe outlined the stringent checks made before residents obtain parking permits. Mr Boulter confirmed that he had also asked that all side roads close to Canal Street and Bassett Street be considered because of the possible displacement effect if residents parking schemes are introduced.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report of the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste Management be noted.

258. ROAD SAFETY

The Forum considered a report by the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste Management on road safety. The report was presented by Mr Karkowski with a copy filed with the minutes.

Mr Karkowski confirmed that the report was a follow up to the one brought to the Forum last year at the request of the county's environment scrutiny committee. He highlighted paragraph 4 of the report in which the Department for Transport has rated the county's Local transport Plan (LTP2) as excellent. On road safety the county was commended for making particular good use of statistical analysis to inform choices and identify further areas for improvement and our delivery of road safety initiative was described as impressive.

Mr Karkowski took Members through the various sections of the report and highlighted Appendix 2 of the report which showed in the area of casualty reduction: speed and red light cameras that there was an overall reduction in accidents of 35%.

In answer to questions on how the figures both statistical and financial are arrived at Mr Karkowski explained the background to both sets of figures. He also explained the background to how mobile and fixed camera sites are sited, with the criteria for fixed cameras dependant on government national guidelines, allied to accident statistics. However he did confirm that the county was planning to review the performance of the cameras in place.

Members highlighted the conflict between allowing parents to move to a school of choice and the increased traffic congestion at the popular schools, with the aim in LTP2 to decrease congestion. Members pointed out that the Education Department should limit the number of pupils at schools, with Beauchamp being quoted as an example, as the infrastructure just cannot cope with the increasing number.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report of the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste Management be noted.

259. PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS TO REDUCE TRAFFIC PROBLEMS IN WIGSTON/ SOUTH WIGSTON

The Forum considered a report by the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste Management on planned improvements to reduce traffic problems in Wigston/South Wigston. The report was presented by Mr Hay with a copy filed with the minutes.

Mr Hay explained that the report was in response to a request from Members at previous meetings. He took Members through the report and advised them of the new arrangements for the preparation of the Transport Improvement Capital Programme which was reported to the Forum on 31st January 2007. These arrangements have been developed in pursuit of the objective of the County Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP2). A provisional programme for 2008/9 is being compiled at present in consultation with the Lead Member for Highways and Transportation and details will be circulated to Members of the Forum in due course.

Mr Hay also highlighted to Members a letter from Leicestershire Constabulary (see Appendix B) referring to a fatal accident on 18th September 2006. In the letter the police identified that no road engineering issues were the cause or contributing factor to the incident. On 14th June 2007 Her Majesty's coroner recorded a verdict of accidental death. The driver of the goods vehicles involved is due to appear before Leicester Magistrates on 13th December 2007 having been charged with careless driving.

Mr Hay took Members through the report advising of:

- a) The recent schemes undertaken
- b) Proposed schemes in the programme
- c) Future schemes aspirations

In answer to a question on whether the vibrant bus competition in Oadby had increased bus usage. Mr Hay confirmed that he believed that information is received by officers on trends in bus patronage linked to LTP objectives. He agreed to ask officers to speak to Mr Kaufman.

Mr Charlesworth explained the problems encountered in South Wigston and asked if officers had considered how to limit the increased traffic flows. He went on to say that the recent/future schemes were important and addressed safety issues. But he also hoped officers would be able to address the problem with congestion, air quality and the impact of traffic.

Mr Hay in answer confirmed that the LTP strategy was fundamental to Blaby Road. This road takes through traffic as well as feeding into the heart of the community. The strategy to constrain the use of cars depended on trying to make other forms of transport more attractive. On the issue of the possible development of Canal Street, Mr Hay confirmed that this was an issue for the planning authority with the county advising on the transport implications. He went on to say that on the subject of the junction at Canal Street discussions were ongoing with the developers looking to improve the junction and the ongoing problem of the location of the bus stops in Canal Street and Blaby Road. However, these bus stops are the first pick up point for crew changes from the bus depot and movement of the stop would have a commercial impact on the bus company.

Members asked if Arriva could be invited to attend to discuss.

Mr Hay agreed to ask officers to check the traffic light sequence Pullman Road where traffic is queuing back into South Wigston and Wigston Magna. A problem was also highlighted with vehicles coming in and out of the swimming pool. Finally, officers were asked to investigate the laying of a drain on the new bus lay-by outside the chemist in Blaby Road to alleviate water backing up to the church.

Mr Hay also agreed that officers discuss the signage from the distributor road to Blaby Road (before Saffron Road) with Mr Boulter.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i) That the report of the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste Management be noted;
- ii) that officers speak to Mr Kaufman regarding the competition between bus companies on services in Oadby;
- iii) that officers invite representation from Arriva to attend the next meeting to discuss the problems with the bus stops in Canal Street and Blaby Road;
- iv) that officers check the traffic light sequence Pullman Road. Traffic is queuing back into South Wigston and Wigston Magna, officers to discuss with Mr Boulter;
- v) that officers check the problem that vehicles encounter coming in and out of the swimming pool South Wigston and speak to Mr Boulter;
- vi) that officers investigate the laying of a new drain in the lay-by outside the chemist on Blaby Road and speak to Mr Boulter; and
- vii) that officers discuss signage from the A426 to Blaby Road before Saffron Road with Mr Boulter.

260. MANUAL FOR STREETS

The Forum considered a report by the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste Management on the Manual for Streets (MfS). The report was introduced by Mrs Notman with a copy filed with the minutes.

Mrs Notman explained to Members that in 2003 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) published detailed research 'Better Streets Better Places – Delivering Sustainable Residential Environments, PPG3 and Highway Adoption. MfS endeavours to provide a consistent approach in adopting roads. In September 2004 the County Council approved as policy its new developers design guide "Highways, Transportation and Development (Htd) addressing many of the issues identified by the ODPM.

Mrs Notman continued and confirmed that MfS was launched in March 2007. Finally she stated that Leicestershire had taken the lead in developing the issues arising from MfS and that the county was looking to standardise the design guide for developers and was hopeful that other authorities such as Leicester City, Nottinghamshire CC and Derbyshire CC would join with the County.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report of the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste Management be noted.

261. UPDATE ON 2007/8 MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAMME

The Forum considered a report by the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste Management on the 2007/8 maintenance and improvement programme. The report was introduced by Mr Grierson with a copy filed with the minutes.

Mr Grierson explained to Members that this was a standard report and asked for questions.

Members asked that the plastic protective wrapping on the traffic signal poles Station Road/ Pullman Road Wigston be removed now that the scheme is complete. Borough officers were also asked to clean up the lay-by which had been left untidy by the contractor.

Mr Grierson agreed to discuss the surface dressing Harborough Road Oadby with Mr Gamble. Mr Kaufman gave thanks to officers for the excellent timing of the scheme in Briar Walk.

In answer to a question from Mr Boulter on re-instatement work Leicester Road, Mr Grierson explained that re-instatements undertaken by utility companies met a nationally laid down standard. These re-instatements are regularly inspected by county officers and although they meet the standard they may not be visually pleasing to the public. However utility companies cannot be forced to resurface roads. Mr Grierson agreed to speak to Mr Boulter on the problems of potholes Rolleston Road.

Mr Grierson agreed to speak to Mr Charlesworth to explain how programmes of work are arrived at and how residents and Member views are factored in.

Officers agreed to speak to Mr Boulter on the Blaby Road scheme.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i) That the report of the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste Management be noted;
- ii) that officers remove plastic protective wrapping from traffic signal poles Station Road/Pullman Road Wigston;
- iii) that Borough officers clean the lay-by Station Road/Pullman Road Wigston which had been left untidy by the contractor;
- iv) that officers discuss the surface dressing Harborough Road Oadby with Mr Gamble;
- v) that officers speak to Mr Boulter on potholes Rolleston Road;
- vi) that officers speak to Mr Charlesworth to explain how programmes of works are arrived at and how the views of residents and Members are factored in; and
- vii) that officers speak to Mr Boulter on the Blaby Road scheme.

262. PROGRAMME OF TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS – CURRENT POSITION

The Forum considered a report by the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste Management on the current position of the Traffic Regulation Orders programme. The report was presented by Mr Grierson with a copy filed with the minutes.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report of the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste Management be noted.

263. ONGOING – ACTION STATEMENT

The Forum considered a report by the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste Management on the ongoing action statement. The report was introduced by Mrs Notman with a copy filed with the minutes.

Mrs Notman updated Members on the current position of the outstanding actions.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report of the Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste Management be noted.

264. ITEMS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

The Chairman asked Members that local patch items be discussed with officers after the meeting.

265. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Chairman confirmed the dates of future meetings.

266. CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS

The Chairman thanked Members and Officers for their attendance at the meeting.

10 October 2007

Chairman

6.35 – 8.10 pm

Date