

Worthing County Local Committee

10 September 2008 - At a meeting of the Worthing County Local Committee at **7.00 pm.** in the Drama Studio at **Davison CE High School for Girls** Selborne Road, Worthing, West Sussex BN11 2JX

Present:

Peter Green	-	Member for Gaisford
John Livermore (Chairman)	-	Member for Worthing West
Keith Mercer	-	Member for Goring and Northbrook
Colin O'Neill	-	Member for Salvington
Irene Richards (Vice Chairman)	-	Member for Worthing East
Clive Roberts	-	Member for Worthing Pier
Steve Waight	-	Member for Goring and Northbrook

In attendance:

Peter Bradley	-	Divisional Manager, Safety and Traffic Management
Hugh Davies	-	Highways Team Leader, Legal Services
Phil Edwards	-	Head of Locality Working
Matthew Evans	-	Assistant Locality Officer
Darryl Hemmings	-	Senior Transport Planner, Sustainable Transport Group
Roger Hobbs	-	Group Manager, Major Projects
Ian Jeffrey	-	Traffic Management Officer (West) Road Policing Unit, Sussex Police
Roger Jones	-	Principal Group Manager, Major Projects
Suzanne Thompson	-	Locality Officer

Apologies

69. Apologies were received from Clem Stevens, Member for Salvington and Donald Lissenburg, Member for Gaisford.

Chairman's Welcome

70. The Chairman welcomed all present to the meeting.

Declaration of Interests

71. Declarations of interest were recorded as follows: John Livermore, as a member of Worthing Borough Council (WBC) and the Chairman of the partnership Project Board, Steve Waight as a member of WBC, Clive Roberts as a member of WBC, Colin O'Neil as a governor of Vale School, and Keith Mercer as the leader of WBC.

Minutes

72. Resolved – that the minutes of the Worthing County Local Committee (CLC) meeting held on 09 July 2008 be confirmed as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

Urgent Matters

73. There were no urgent matters raised.

Progress Statement

74. A member requested that the Sea Shelter referred to in the Progress Statement not be removed without notice to the Committee. Keith Mercer undertook to keep the Committee informed.

75. Mr Mercer gave a verbal update on the Children and Young People's Service budget for Worthing. Members were informed that in particular there was a problem with recruiting social workers throughout the county and consequently there were difficulties due to understaffing, however, he assured members that the budget was not at issue and Worthing was not disadvantaged from the point of view of funding. Colin O'Neill agreed and added that the amount of money spent on looked-after children in Worthing was considerable.

Chapel Road & Marine Parade Route Safety/Environmental Enhancement Scheme

76. Roger Jones gave the Committee a brief reminder on the proposal for Chapel Road/Union Place and what it aimed to achieve. Members noted that the primary aim was casualty reduction and that the closure of the western end would improve the street scene by reducing street furniture. Mr Jones informed members that travel surveys and modelling had shown that 300 vehicles per hour travelled east through Union Place, traffic that would be removed by closing the entrance at the western end. Members noted that following the last meeting, further observations had been made and results had been received from local traffic modelling undertaken by the Highways Agency which covered the western area and beyond. The modelling and observations indicated that the increased traffic traveling on Chapel Road northwards towards the North Street roundabout would be accommodated within the existing highway capacity, and suggested that there was adequate capacity at the North Street Roundabouts and subsequent down stream roundabouts at Lyndhurst Road and Union Place to satisfactorily accommodate traffic flows.

77. Mr Jones informed members of observations that had been made of traffic patterns during the two weeks prior to this meeting. Members noted that during this period a full road closure of Union Place had been in operation while a statutory utility company had undertaken necessary works. The condition was not precisely the same as that which would exist following the introduction of the proposals but did provide a good approximation of the effects that the proposals would have on the traffic flows on the surrounding road network indicating that the main 'A' class road network coped well with the reassigned flows.

78. Mr Jones drew members' attention to an objection received by email in the 24 hours prior to the meeting from Royal Mail, who were concerned that they may have difficulties in reversing large vehicles into their site under the current proposals. Mr Jones informed members that the team had looked closely at their design and considered that by not widening the pavement on the eastern side by as much as proposed they could allow more room for manoeuvring of the Royal Mail vehicles.

79. Mr Jones further explained that this proposal was for an experimental order. If the Committee were to approve it it would come into play and analysis of the scheme would begin after six months. If no objections were received it would be made permanent after 12 months. If there were objections it would return to the CLC at the end of the 12 months and if those objections could not be accommodated, it would lapse and revert after 18 months. Therefore, if there were further objections the CLC would get a further chance to review the proposal.

80. Members responses were as follows:

- I regard the accident statistics as a red herring and don't see any need to put an embargo on the turn into Union Place. All that is necessary is to change the traffic signs and encourage people to use North Street from Richmond Road. Secondly it has been seen that while the plumbing work has been carried out that changing the timing of the signals encourages traffic up to North Street. So, I would rather see a change in the traffic signage and a change in the traffic signals for six months and then that reviewed and if it does not work, then stop up the turn into Union Place.
- I thought the information regarding the roundabout was rather woolly. The type of accidents that occur there are due to the road layout, the view is good and motorists can assess the traffic at an early point on the approach to the roundabout so can be moving very quickly and there are many collisions as evidenced by the amount of debris on the road. With more traffic coming into the roundabout surely more collisions are likely. Mr Jones replied: *If there are no casualties the accidents are not recorded, so although there is debris there it does not necessarily mean an increase in casualties. The layout for the North Street roundabout was made 20 years ago and is not ideal, it is not our plan to modify it here but I believe that more through traffic can calm things down, as more traffic approaches there are fewer gaps which does slow the traffic, our observations here cannot give us a clear prediction, I'm sorry I can't give a more precise answer.* Ian Jeffries added: *Yes, not all accidents are recorded and this roundabout does get shunts, your point on too much view on approach is valid and we can put controls in place. The point made regarding more traffic volume is also valid. The other effect that we would have with the Union Place proposal would be better movement on the mini-roundabout because there won't be the throughput of traffic from Union Place.*
- I am aware of the points raised by the police and the Borough. At first we were told that the Royal Mail did not object and now we see that they aggressively reject the proposal, so now we have a situation where a major user is objecting to the scheme. This must be taken into account. A committee member replied: *I think it is fair to point out that the Royal Mail and the Post Office are two different companies and the Post Office is in*

favour of the proposal. Their customers come by foot. I am a pedestrian and can see from that point of view this will be much safer. I feel we must weigh the Royal Mail's objections against the benefits for customers of Post Office Counters. Roger Jones added: Regarding the Royal Mail's concerns we note that prohibition of entry at the western end of Union Place does mean an extra one minute on their journey, I do not dismiss this but do not think it of huge significance. I would suggest that removal of the extraneous traffic in Union Place would make their manoeuvring of their vehicles safer.

- I am concerned about the North Street roundabout and feel that if the Committee does agree to go with the experimental order we must insist that work is done on two roads: the extra arm coming in from Winton Place on the North Street roundabout is very dangerous, this must be looked at and also in Chapel Road there are difficulties getting out of the car park now and with increased through traffic this will be worse and we also need to accommodate Wilkinson's with all their deliveries. Both of these problems must be looked at and I would support the proposal with this indication. Roger Jones replied: *There are no proposals to look at these issues as part of this scheme but Peter Bradley is here tonight and I'm sure would agree that we could look at these areas you mention but of course any works would be dependent on budgets and commitments. We can certainly come back with proposals, we would not say 'no'. Roger Hobbs added: This is an experimental proposal; we will look into the effects on the Post Office and the Royal Mail. They speak of fear of congestion and Worthing Initiative are also concerned. We can see from the recent works that there will not be gridlock. I believe there will be benefits from the reduction in traffic in Union Place. The whole point of an experiment is to see what the effects are. If this proposal were to be made permanent they would again be part of that consultation.*
- What if we delay while you look into the roundabout and Chatsworth Road situation? Mr Jones replied: *If we defer we run into difficulties with the programming and contractors. I am conscious that the stated date has already slipped and we want to have the works underway before Christmas so as not to interfere with trading. I suggest that if the Committee is minded to approve the proposal we can expedite looking at the roundabout for possibilities for minor improvements and bring suggestions to the next CLC but I would urge you to make a decision on the proposal tonight.*
- I see three issues: at the Post Office first thing in the morning Union Place is littered with vehicles including articulated lorries trying to turn. I think all in all, with this proposal they will do better; also for pedestrians I believe that stopping through traffic here will benefit them; and finally as far as the roundabout accidents are concerned, I accept what you are saying regarding the reduction in traffic speed with the increased volume.
- The consideration of this temporary closure has been given a great deal of officer time and expertise and we have received a lot of information. I am happy to go ahead and would not like to risk losing funding because of delays; we need to get on and before Christmas.

81. The Chairman invited questions and comments from the floor. Responses were as follows:

- I have worked in Union Place for over four years. It is a different place between 7am and 8am, gridlocked with Royal Mail vans. I think the articulated lorries should have time slots for their deliveries. Do officers have that power? Mr Jones replied: *We are suggesting they use the shorter 50 ft trailers.*
- I disagree with the point about pedestrian access in Union Place; people have absolutely no need to walk on that side of the road. Also at Christmas that car park can be a nightmare. I also live in Central Worthing and have found this week it's just as congested as ever. A committee member replied: *Lots of people do cross Union Place, I do, I object to this comment.*
- Saturday's will be the litmus test; Union Place is usually completely blocked. Last Saturday the traffic flowed fine, as long as the traffic lights were in favour of the right turn into Chatsworth Road.

82. The Chairman thanked residents for their comments and requested a decision from the committee.

83. Resolved that the Head of Legal Services be authorised to advertise and bring into operation the 'No entry' proposal at Union Place & Chapel Road junction and, subject to there being no objections, the experimental order be made permanent.

Proposed Traffic Signal Controlled Pedestrian Crossing: A24 Findon Road

84. Peter Bradley, Divisional Manager, Safety and Traffic Management, outlined a report on a proposal to install a new crossing on the A24 Findon Road, 20 metres south of the centre of Hillview Rise. The Committee heard that the four objections to the scheme from two residents concerned the access to residences 113 and 115 in Hillview rise. Members noted that officers had had difficulty placing the crossing, as there were not many locations to choose from.

85. The Chairman invited comments from members and responses were as follows:

- I find no objection but will record my interest in the cycle route. I feel the officers have done the best they can on the placement.
- I endorse this proposal, the crossing is needed, there has been a fatality at this location.

86. The Chairman thanked members for their comments and requested their decision.

87. Resolved that the Committee give approval to the Head of Legal Services to implement the pedestrian crossing on the A24 Findon Road, south of Hillview Rise as advertised.

Proposed Traffic Signal Controlled Pedestrian Crossing: South Farm Road

88. Peter Bradley, Divisional Manager, Safety and Traffic Management, outlined a report on a proposal to install a new crossing on the South Farm Road near Worthing High School. Members noted that two local residents had raised four points of objection relating to accident statistics, loss of on-street parking, the only people to benefit being students, that the scheme would be a waste of money, and an increase of traffic congestion and noise pollution.

89. The Committee noted that the request for a crossing was initiated by Worthing High School and that a 12-hour survey had counted 1000 pedestrians crossing the road. Mr Bradley informed members that the accident statistics had included two students and that the point made by a resident that the students were already aided in crossing the road by their tutors and therefore this additional work a waste of money, was countered by the fact that the tutors attendance to help the students was entirely voluntary.

90. The Chairman invited comments from members and responses were as follows:

- I question that there is a problem with on-street parking, I have never encountered this. I think that the safety of the students is paramount and I support the proposal.

91. The Chairman thanked members for their comments and requested their decision.

92. Resolved that: the Committee give approval to the Head of Legal Services to implement the pedestrian crossing on South Farm Road near Worthing High School as advertised.

Town Centre to Findon Cycle Route

93. Darryl Hemmings, Senior Transport Planner, Sustainable Transport Group detailed his report proposing a shared cycle track between Vale and Offington Drive. Members noted the work yet to be undertaken at the entrance to Cissbury Court.

94. The Chairman invited questions and comments from members. Responses were as follows:

- I have three concerns: the number of users currently identified shows 133 over a 12 hour period presumably these cyclists are going both ways, so that number can be halved. I question what time these cyclists are using the route – yesterday I monitored the area by the shops from 12.30pm to 1.30pm and not one cyclist went by. I assume cyclists use the route in the rush hour so I question whether they are local residents. Secondly, I notice there is a £50,000 shortfall in funding for this scheme, if you look at the route coming up to Hillview Rise the children coming to school can cross and walk up Hillview Rise – so there's no need to build that part of the route as you haven't yet decided the route to Findon. I suggest we use the turn into Maytree Drive down Lime Tree Avenue; however, this is all unnecessary, as you haven't decided how to come down to Findon from the Library. My third

point concerns health and safety: a shared route invites accidents caused by inconsiderate users; I would like to see a white line dividing the pedestrian from the cyclist.

- I welcome this route, the lower end of which comes through my ward. I believe we should be encouraging people out of cars. I am happy to see the cycle track and that proficiency instructors will go to Vale First and Middle schools. I believe the track is better not segregated – there will always be difficulties where the track narrows - to accommodate trees for instance.
- There are 133 cyclists so you are expecting an increase of just a dozen cyclists? That's £22,000 to encourage 12 people to use their bike.
- The seafront route on the boulevard is now very well used, but you wouldn't have thought that before it was put in. These things need time to bed-in; the numbers using the route now are irrelevant.
- I am not against it, I just suggesting it stops at Hillview Road, not further north. The other points are valid but I would remind members that tracks off main roads are not cycle tracks they are just signed as such and we can continue to do that. I am just asking we be prudent, and suggest the route stop at Hillview and go no further north until Highways decide on the route to Findon. I propose this as an amendment.

95. The Chairman noted Mr O'Neill's amendment and Mr Mercer seconded it. The Chairman then opened the discussion to the floor. Responses were as follows:

- I am a parent and a cyclist. I have two children at Vale School and I would love to be able to cycle the whole way there but we would need to cycle on the pavement and I don't want to teach my children that. If there were a route I would use it daily and would encourage other parents to do the same.
- I am the ward councillor and agree that there are other roads that cyclists can use. I think the amendment very sensible.
- I am not against a shared route if the priority is given to the pedestrian.

96. Mr Hemmings replied: In terms of value for money it is estimated that the increase in cyclists would increase to more than 20% over two years. It is difficult to predict but in practice we have seen figures rise above this, the seafront route increased above 20% in one year and that is a shared route as well. On the question of inviting accidents I draw your attention to a recent incident where a child was injured by straying into a cycle track – if the track is shared then research has shown that people do take more care. On the continuation of the route: we are trying to serve the destinations here at the moment and later will move up to Findon. We are not looking to save money at this point; we will look to secure developer contributions from the Highways Agency to meet any shortfall.

97. The Chairman thanked all for their contribution and reiterated the amendment to agree the route but that it terminates at Hillview Rise until the route to Findon was determined. A resident interjected that it would be sensible to continue on the east side, past the library to the shops in that instance. The Chairman requested members vote on the amendment. Members voted three to

two against. The Chairman noted that the amendment had fallen and requested members vote on the original recommendation.

98. Resolved that the Committee endorse the design of the Town Centre to Findon Road scheme to enable its implementation as part of the 2009/10 programme, subject to suitable revisions following further survey and specific consultation with the independent safety auditor to address concerns of residents at Cissbury Court.

The Boulevard Cycle Improvements

99. Darryl Hemmings, detailed his report on the proposal for cycle lanes to be provided at the roundabout junctions with The Strand/Shafesbury Avenue and Terringes Avenue/Palantine Road, noting that a traffic regulation order would be required which would come to the CLC at a later date.

100. The Chairman invited comments and questions from members. Responses were as follows:

- To recount the history: the initial consultation in 2001 had 60% objections, in 2008 there were 68% objections and we are asked to agree this scheme on the basis of the changes made. I don't think there are sufficient changes. This needs to go back out to consultation.
- I support that; we must involve the public.

101. The Chairman thanked members for their comments and opened the discussion to the floor.

- As a ward member I am disappointed that this did not go back to consultation first. I am concerned about the loss of spaces with the proposed echelon parking.

102. The Chairman thanked residents for their comments and asked the members if they would like to consider an amendment to the recommendation. Mr Waight requested a further round of consultation, Mr Mercer seconded that and the remaining members agreed.

103. Resolved that the Committee do not endorse the revised design for the Boulevard Cycle Improvement scheme and request that it go out to further public consultation.

Worthing Community Initiative Funding (CIF)

104. Mrs Richards introduced the report on CIF for Worthing, noting that a thank you letter had been received from East Broadwater Baptist Church for the replacement of windows at the Youth Centre. Mrs Richards went on to request that members allow West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (WSFRS) to use money already awarded to them for a different purpose and to detail the new bids for funding and request the member's decision on each one.

105. Resolved that:

- i) members agreed to monies awarded to WSFRS for publicity to now be used to purchase Firelink Alarms; and
- ii) the funding requests as set out in the report.

Local Authority (LA) School Governors

106. Members considered the appointments of LA School Governors as set out on the agenda and noted the existing vacancies at Downsbrook Middle School, Laurels First School and Springfield First School.

107. Resolved that:

- i) the Committee approve the following appointments: Mrs Anita Warren to Downsbrook Middle School for a term of three years, Mrs Heather Ellwood to Chesswood Middle School for a term of three years; and
- ii) the re-appointment of Mrs Anita Darlington to Whitemead First School, for a term of four years.

Public Question Time (talk with us)

108. The Chairman invited questions from residents on subjects not already covered on the agenda. Responses were as follows:

- On behalf of the South Broadwater Residents Association could you please clarify whether the double yellow lines in Ivy Arch are in the Controlled Parking Scheme and whether this is now under the aegis of National Car Parks Services? The Chairman replied: *Thank you, we will take that away and reply to you directly.*

109. The meeting closed at 9.35pm.

Chairman