



**NORWICH HIGHWAYS AGENCY COMMITTEE**

**10.00 a.m. – 11.50 a.m.**

**22 May 2008**

Present:           **County Councillors:**           **City Councillors:**  
                          Adams (Chair) (V)                   Morrey (Vice-Chair) (V)  
                          Gunson (V)                            Read (V)  
                          Scutter                                 Bremner  
                          Shaw                                     George  
                          Ward

\*(V) – Voting Member

Apologies:        Councillor Lubbock (City Council)

**1. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE**

The Committee welcomed City Councillors Bremner and George to their first meeting of the Committee.

The Committee concurred with the Chair that former Councillor Brenda Ferris's work and support for the Committee should be acknowledged.

**RESOLVED** that the Chair writes to former Councillor Ferris, on behalf of the Committee, to thank her for her contribution to the work of the Committee.

**2. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

**Use of Newmarket Road by Freight Consolidation Vehicles**

Matthew Williams on behalf of the Norwich Cycling Campaign asked the following question:-

'If there are potential economic and environmental benefits to be gained from freight consolidation and since it appears that no consideration has been given to operating the freight consolidation centre using the existing traffic arrangements, what are the precise reasons why it is considered necessary that the goods lorries use the bus and cycle lane?'

The Norwich Area Transportation Co-Ordinator, Norfolk County Council, gave the following response:-

'The Consolidation Centre is, and has been since in inception last Autumn, operating under existing traffic conditions.

In order to encourage increased use of the centre, by providing a reliable delivery time to the retailer at any time of day the use of the bus lane is key. It will enable the centre to deliver during periods of congestion without the time fluctuations that occur and therefore guarantee a delivery time, something which is not currently possible. Experience from other locations indicates that this enables retailers to plan acceptance of deliveries better, thereby making better use of their staff resources.

The overall benefits of this is that more retailers are likely to sign up to the service and this in turn will help to reduce the numbers of other HGVs on the roads of Norwich helping to reduce the overall number of conflicts with all road users, but in particular the more vulnerable modes of cyclists and pedestrians.'

### **Wolfe Road**

Councillor Ramsay, City Councillor for Nelson Ward, asked the following question:-

'Some residents of Wolfe Road have raised with me the need for traffic calming and a 20mph speed limit on their road. They report that speeding and rat-running are common. Given that there is a school and nursery on the road, could Wolfe Road please be made a priority for a 20mph limit and appropriate traffic calming? I would suggest a consultation with residents about the type of traffic calming to be introduced.'

The Head of Transportation and Landscape, Norwich City Council, replied that the current position was that there was no specific policy for all roads with a school to have 20mph limit and traffic calming. The implementation of 20mph limits near schools reflected particular problems. This scheme could be considered with the bid for Local Transport Funds for 2009/2010 at the November meeting of this Committee.

### **Kett's Hill**

Councillor Ramsay then asked a second question:-

'Some residents of Kett's Hill have raised with me the issue of speeding on Kett's Hill and the associated problem of it being very difficult for pedestrians to cross the road. I appreciate that as this is a radial route into the city it would be difficult to install traffic calming measures. However, residents have asked me to request a pedestrian crossing somewhere on the hill, which would have the effect of slowing the traffic down as well as helping pedestrians cross. There is currently no crossing on the hill itself, just one at the very top at the start of Plumstead Road and a pedestrian refuge at the bottom near the roundabout.'

The Head of Transportation and Landscape said that he would talk to local Councillors regarding this issue, with a view to considering inclusion in the bid in the

report on the Capital Programme for 2009/2010 for consideration by the Committee at its November meeting.

### **Cycling on Pavements**

The Chair referred to a written question from Mr D Kemp and read out the question in Mr Kemp's absence:-

'With (sometimes dangerous) cycling, now endemic in Norwich, please consider erecting signs to state clearly 'No Cycling' (obviously designated to cycle paths if on sidewalks/pavements this would not apply). Many existing opportunities to place signs already exist, i.e. speed restriction/camera shape outlines/slow down, etc.

The only sign I have seen, concerning cyclists is close to subway entrances – 'CYCLISTS DISMOUNT'.

Cycling on pavements is illegal! No one seems to know of this. Please help. It's getting dangerous for all pedestrians, especially mothers/pushchairs, with toddlers and babies.'

(Mr Kemp's letter then gave suggestions of signs that could be used.)

The Head of Transportation and Landscape said that he would contact Mr Kemp concerning this issue. The Safer Neighbourhood Area Panel for the City Centre had raised the issue and the police were taking action against cyclists using the pavement. The scope of signing all pavements was impractical.

### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Scutter declared a personal interest in item 5 'Use of Newmarket Road by Freight Consolidation Vehicles' because he was resident in Newmarket Road and a prejudicial interest in item 'Tourist Vehicles in the City Centre' as he was a friend of one of the applicants.

Councillor Morrey declared a personal interest in item 5 'Use of Newmarket Road' as he had a relative living in Newmarket Road.

Councillor Ward declared a personal interest in item 8 'West Earlham to City Centre Measures' because she was resident in the area.

### **4. MINUTES**

#### **Matters Arising – Public Questions**

Councillor Scutter referred to his question regarding the resurfacing of Newmarket Road and his concerns about the lack of signage on the Southern Bypass/A11 junction. The response that he had received suggested that the Highways Agency did not allow the use of diversion signs on trunk roads. There had been a sewer collapse on the same stretch of road, resulting in a partial road closure, and

diversion signs had been put up on the trunk roads. He asked for clarification about whether such signs were allowed.

The Head of Transportation and Landscape apologised if he had misled the Committee. The Highways Agency did co-operate on signing roadworks. The issue was that the wrong assumption had been made and he would ensure that this did not happen again.

**RESOLVED** to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2008.

## **5. USE OF NEWMARKET ROAD BY FREIGHT CONSOLIDATION VEHICLES**

(Councillors Scutter and Morrey had declared a personal interest in this item.)

Discussion ensued in which Councillors Read, Bremner and Scutter spoke against the proposal. Their concerns included the encouragement of freight at the detriment of the use of other infrastructure such as rail, the use of the bus lane in Newmarket Road by HGVs and concerns for cyclists and other road users when HGVs moved out of the bus lane to overtake buses and cyclists.

Councillor Morrey said that he supported the proposal and considered that it was the only to make the Consolidation Centre work. However, the City Council had passed a motion opposing the use of the bus lane in Newmarket Road and he must concur with the Council's position.

Councillor Gunson said the use of the consolidation centre would benefit cyclists and road users across the City and would reduce the number of HGVs in the City Centre. There was no evidence that the proposal would lead to an increase in the number of accidents to cyclists using the bus/cycle lane in Newmarket Road. The suggestion that vehicles used the By-Pass and outer Ring-Road was not feasible as at some point vehicles needed to access the City Centre to make deliveries, most of which were by lorry and not by rail or smaller vehicles.

In response, the Norwich Area Transportation Co-Ordinator said that the amount of freight was 100% by road and not rail and that the proposals would not preclude the use of rail for freight in the future. The advantages of the use of the bus lane would permit reliable delivery times which made a difference to staffing resources for shops.

The Chair considered that the buses were more of a problem to cyclists using the Newmarket Road bus lane than HGVs. The scheme would remove 20 HGVs from the City Centre which would benefit the City as a whole. He reminded the Committee that it was signed-up to CIVITAS and that this scheme was part of this initiative. The Committee could review the experimental Traffic Regulation Order in 12 months' time.

**RESOLVED**, on the Chair's casting vote, with 2 members voting in favour (Councillors Adams and Gunson) and 2 members voting against (Councillors Morrey and Read) to support the introduction of a 12 month experimental Traffic Regulation Order allowing the use of the inbound Newmarket Road bus lanes and the

bus/loading route through Castle Meadow/Red Lion Street by the Norwich Freight Consolidation Centre Vehicles.

## **6. TOURIST VEHICLES IN THE CITY CENTRE**

(Councillor Scutter, having declared an interest, left the room at this point.)

Mr Agombar of the Sightseeing Tour of Olde Norwich addressed the Committee and referred to the refusal of the Committee to his use of the pedestrian part of King Street and St George's. He considered that he was disadvantaged and requested that both operations should be treated as a level playing field.

Mr Williams, the operator of the Road Train, also addressed the Committee and disputed the veracity of some of the statements made in the previous speaker's letter and explained that the Road Train had used Timberhill whilst Cattle Market Street had been closed. A supplementary statement from Mr Williams was circulated to the Committee.

The Head of Transportation and Landscape said that both operators were running under different legislation and that the fact of the matter was that comparing each operation was like 'chalk and cheese'. The Olde Norwich Tour operated as a bus service. The Road Train was guided by the regime introduced by the Committee and had the ability to use pedestrianised areas. He reminded the Committee that the corner of St Peters Street and Bethel Street was a junction and used by service vehicles for St Peter Mancroft's Church.

### **RESOLVED:-**

- (1) not to introduce a stop for the road train on the corner of St Peters Street and Bethel Street;
- (2) not to allow the Sightseeing Tour of Olde Norwich vehicle to be exempted from any further pedestrianisation restrictions.

(Councillor Scutter was readmitted to the meeting at this point.)

## **7. RESULTS OF THE FEASIBILITY STUDY INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF A 20MPH SPEED LIMIT FOR NORWICH**

Councillor Read said that he was not a 'fan of the report' and that the second recommendation was not sufficient to see it as an objection to the introduction of a 20 mph speed limit and that although 30 mph speed limits were not universally observed it was not reason to get rid of them. A speed limit of 20 mph even if not fully effective without traffic calming measures would be cost effective. Reference was made to the implementation of 20 mph limits in North Lanarkshire and Aberdeen, using signs only, which had been well received by the respective police forces. This was a national movement. He considered that parallels could be drawn with Portsmouth. The report did not address the fact that reducing speeds could encourage people to walk or cycle for short journeys. With regard to value for money the rate of return was still 1/5<sup>th</sup> greater than the average safety scheme and there was public support for a 20 mph speed limit in residential areas.

During discussion, Councillor Shaw said that he supported a reduction in the speed limit to 20 mph without additional traffic calming measures and considered it was a 'great idea'. He considered any degree of reduction better than leaving the situation as it was. Councillor Scutter considered that the argument to reduce speeds was compelling and that the fundamental issue was safety, although there were environmental benefits. The vast majority of the public wanted a 20 mph speed limit. Councillor Morrey supported a reduction to 20 mph but considered that in the long-term additional traffic calming measures would be required. The officers had a duty to make recommendations based on their professional expertise but it was the members who would decide whether or not to accept their recommendations. Councillor Bremner considered that a blanket 20 mph speed limit in residential areas of Norwich was welcome and said that chicanes and speed tables were effective at reducing speeds but were a vast cost. Residents attending Safer Neighbourhood Area Panels in his Ward were keen to enforce a 20 mph limit in residential areas and there was talk of training local police officers and residents to use speed guns to obtain information about speeding.

Councillor Read moved and Councillor Shaw seconded that the recommendations of the report be amended by deleting paragraphs (3) and (5) and inserting an additional paragraph recommending the introduction of a 20 mph speed limit ('signed only') throughout the unclassified and residential road network in Norwich, and to request the officers to draw up plans and costs for its implementation.

**RESOLVED**, with 2 members voting in favour of the recommendation as amended (Councillors Morrey and Read), 0 members voting against, and 2 members abstaining ( Councillors Adams and Gunson), to:-

- (1) note the City Council motion which aspires for the adoption of a 20 mph speed limit as the norm for all residential areas of the City by 2009;
- (2) note that introduction of a speed limit alone is unlikely to reduce all average speeds to 20 mph;
- (3) note that a hybrid solution comprising of speed limits and traffic calming applied across the City is likely to take many years to introduce and that other initiatives may achieve greater value for money;
- (4) ask the Norfolk Accident Reduction Partnership to consider whether and how education and publicity initiatives could be used to bring about a behavioural change amongst drivers to reduce their speed to 20 mph or less in residential streets;
- (5) recommend the introduction of a 20 mph speed limit ('signed only') throughout the unclassified, residential road network in Norwich, and to request the officers to draw up plans and costs for its implementation.

**8. WEST EARLHAM TO CITY CENTRE MEASURES/ST JOHN'S SCHOOL SIGNING IMPROVEMENTS – HEIGHAM ROAD TO CITY CENTRE CYCLE LINK**

(Councillor Ward had declared a personal interest in this item.)

County Councillor McKay and the Chair of the West Pottergate Residents' Association addressed the Committee opposing the suggested cycle route through Douro Place, expressing concern for the older and vulnerable people in the area and the fact that cycles would come out of a concealed entrance. Photographs showing this were circulated at the meeting. Councillors McKay and Ward had walked the routes and were aware of public opinion on this issue.

During discussion members expressed concern about the proposed cycle routes being an 'accident waiting to happen' and it was suggested that neither scheme should be implemented. Councillor Bremner said that he could support the second route from Pottergate to the underpass but considered the route through Earlham Road convoluted.

Councillor Ramsay said that the cycle routes were very important for Nelson Ward constituents but said in support of the Residents Association that the route through the alleyway from Stafford Street to the Douro Chapel was very narrow and cyclists would need to dismount.

The Transportation Manager acknowledged that both routes were a compromise and although neither was perfect it was the professional opinion of officers that Route 1 was marginally better. The route along Heigham Street/Stafford Street was very narrow and could be looked at as part of a future local safety scheme.

**RESOLVED** to:-

- (1) reject the proposed cycle routes:
- (2) ask the Head of Transportation and Landscape to consider the route using Heigham Road as part of the planned local safety scheme at the Heigham Road / Earlham Road junction.

**9. OBJECTIONS TO BE ADVERTISED TROS RELATING TO CROME ROAD AND SOUTHALLS WAY (FORMER STARTRITE FACTORY)**

Councillor Ward spoke in favour of the proposed Traffic Regulation Orders.

In response to a question, the Head of Transportation and Landscape said that implementation of a 20 mph speed limit in residential areas of Norwich, as resolved previously at this meeting, would take a time to implement and therefore this report was not 'superfluous'.

**RESOLVED**, with 2 members voting in favour (Councillors Morrey and Read) and 2 members abstaining (Councillors Adams and Gunson) to ask the Head of Transportation and Landscape and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to

complete the statutory processes associated with changing the following TROs, all of which are shown on plan number:-

- (1) Introduce a 20mph Zone on Churchill Road (between Silver Road and Crome Road), Dibden Road, Crome Road (from just south of its junction with Dibden Road), Romany Road and Southalls Way
- (2) Introduce a pedestrian Zone within the newly constructed parts of Crome Road and Southalls Way (within the development of the former Startrite Shoe factory)
- (3) prohibit all on-street parking in the new estate road (the newly constructed parts of Crome Road and Southalls Way) except in the designated spaces constructed for the purpose.

#### **10. TUCKSWOOD SCHOOL SAFER AND HEALTHIER JOURNEY TO SCHOOL RESULTS OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

Councillor Morrey said that he had been advised that the school governors had not been included in the consultation. The Transportation Manager said that the Head Teacher had been consulted and it would be assumed that the Governors would have been included in this. She undertook to write to the Chair of Governors about this issue.

Councillor Scutter welcomed the proposal and expressed concern about the length of time it took to implement measures to ensure the safety of young children. He pointed out that the school had opened as a new school and this might have contributed to the problems highlighted above about consultation.

Councillor Bremner pointed out that the roundabout was similar to the one at the West Earlham Centre and suggested that it should be one-way in front of the school. Members were advised that a safety audit would be conducted when built.

A representative of the Norwich Cycling Campaign said that as traffic was very low, the introduction of a one way system would be detrimental to cyclists and pedestrians.

**RESOLVED** to approve the measures shown in the plans at Appendix 1 and Appendix 3 of the report.

#### **11. TRANSPORT INNOVATION FUND (TIF) STATUS REPORT**

Councillor Gunson, in response to a question from Councillor Read, said that the guidelines for the use of TIF was proscribed by the Department of Transport and that the County Council had provided matched funding for the feasibility study. The Northern Distributor Road and the implementation of the Norwich Area Transport Strategy would reduce traffic flow in the centre of Norwich.

The Senior Transport Planner, Norfolk County Council, said that cyclists would benefit from the transport measures.



**RESOLVED** to note the report and the decision made by the County Council's Cabinet on 19 May 2008.

## **12. LOCAL BUS SERVICE RELIABILITY AND PERFORMANCE**

The Head of Transport and Landscape said that he would write to one of the bus operators to see if they would be willing to release information about customer satisfaction surveys. Members were advised that the results of the Joint Bus Scrutiny Committee would be reported to the City Council on 3 June 2008.

Councillor Read pointed out that the Transport Bill would make it easier for Quality Bus Contracts and this should be reviewed when it became an Act.

The Network Project Manager, Norfolk County Council, said that additional facilities to the use of ticket vending machines were being considered. This would include the ability to purchase weekly tickets in advance and avoid bus services being disrupted on a Monday, and also to reflect comments from disability groups, such as travel information and increasing the public awareness of the availability of these machines. There was not requirement in the legislation to promote smartcards, which would be costly and require a long lead in time to introduce.

**RESOLVED** to note the general improvements in performance.

## **13. MAJOR ROADWORKS – REGULAR MONITORING**

Councillor Read requested information about works to the Bowthorpe Roundabout overrunning.

**RESOLVED** to:-

- (1) note the report;
- (2) ask the Head of Transportation and Landscape to investigate the reasons for the delay in works to Bowthorpe Roundabout.

CHAIR