



NORWICH HIGHWAYS AGENCY COMMITTEE

10.00am to 12.25pm

24 March 2011

Present:	County Councillors:	City Councillors:
	Adams (Chair) (V)	Bremner (Vice-Chair) (V)
	Plant (V) (until end of item 6)	Read (V) (until end of item 9)
	Bearman	MacDonald
	Scutter	
	Shaw (substitute V from item 7)	

*(V) – Voting Member

Apologies: City Councillors Altman and Morphew

1. COMMITTEE MEMBERS

RESOLVED to record the committee's gratitude to Councillors Morphew and Read who were not seeking re-election in the Norwich City Council local elections in May 2011.

2. PETITIONS

Hellesdon Road – pedestrian crossing

Ms Lucy Galvin presented the petition on behalf of residents of Hellesdon Road as follows:

"We, the undersigned, call upon the Norwich Highways Agency Committee to install a crossing on Hellesdon Road near the junction with Hellesdon Hall Road. At the moment there is no safe place to cross the road and cars travel very fast around the bend, making it dangerous for people living in the area. "

The transportation manager, Norwich City Council, responded and said that the council had not received a request for a crossing at this location in at least 10 years and that she would arrange for it to be surveyed later in the summer. The survey would look at the number of pedestrians crossing the road, how long they needed to wait before a suitable gap in the traffic and the number of accidents recorded. A crossing would be subject to priority as the budget was severely limited.

Councillor Read, in his capacity as ward councillor for Wensum Ward, said that he hoped that the petition could be taken seriously given the number of signatures from members of the community.

Essex Street – traffic management

Councillor Little, divisional and ward councillor for Town Close Ward, presented the following petition on behalf of residents in Essex Street

“We, the undersigned, call on the joint Norwich Highways Agency Committee to undertake the necessary measures to prevent dangerous driving and speeding on Essex Street.”

Councillor Little said that the petition was signed by all the residents in Essex Street with the exception of five households who were not home when the petition came round. The particular problem was that it was a straight one-way street and was used as a cut through from Unthank Road and Newmarket Road.

The transportation manager responded, with the aid of slides, said that the issues was traffic management. Monitoring showed that 85% of drivers were complying with speeds of 20 mph. Chicaned parking could be considered to reduce speeding and accidents in Essex Street. It had not been considered in the past when the street was a back route to the hospital. However, as budgets were limited it was not fair to look at this street in isolation.

Half Mile Road - pavements

The chair read out a petition, that had been presented at the meeting of the city council on 22 March 2011 and referred to this committee, on behalf of Councillor Edwards, divisional councillor for Mile Cross ward:

“We, the undersigned, call on Norwich City Council to pull up the uneven and dangerous paving slabs on Half Mile Road, near the junction with Mile Cross Road. The slabs should then either be replaced evenly, or the pavement should be tarmaced to ensure the problem does not occur again.”

The head of city development services, Norwich City Council, thanked Councillor Edwards for bringing the issue to the council's attention and said that defective pavements were usually identified as part of routine inspections. The footway management programme for 2011-12 was currently being finalised and would include the resurfacing of this particular location.

In response to members, the head of city development services explained that the footways were inspected four times a year. In some areas such as Half Mile Road, tree route damage meant that defective pavements were being constantly repaired. This petition was asking for a longer term solution. The committee had responsibility for the overall programme and received reports through the monitoring reports. The committee could be advised if a scheme could not be included.

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Question 1 – Pedicab access to pedestrian areas

Mr Chris Maloney asked the following question:

“3 Wheel Ads is the first pedicab business in operation in Norwich, we provide an alternative green mode of transport in the city centre which is completely free of charge to the public. Provision of this service is achieved by selling advertising space on the pedicab to both local and national businesses/ organisations. Our unique service provides a powerful platform for potential sponsors to not only advertise there products and services but also to raise there environmental profile by investing in a zero emission, fun and eye catching mode of public transport.

The pedicabs we use are 100% pedal powered, they are fitted with seat belts for added peace of mind which we insist the passenger is wearing prior to moving, we are fully insured with £5 million public liability cover and our riders are required to be over 21 with a full UK driver's licence. The service we provide is only available when we have sponsors advertising with us, making our ability to access and navigate around the city centre to the busiest and most vibrant areas extremely important, in order to attract potential sponsors keen to get there message seen in these areas, whilst indirectly providing a free public service.

Over the last twelve months we have been lucky enough to be involved in a number of public events around the county including last years Lord Mayors procession, the Royal Norfolk Show, Sheringham Carnival etc, all of which where executed without incident even though our areas of operation where all highly congested by pedestrians. The Royal Norfolk Show's path ways were the busiest by a long way, in fact I would go as far to say just as busy as Gentleman's Walk on a Saturday afternoon. However, owing to the fact that the pedicabs travel at a snail's pace and are highly visible, combined with the riders' responsible attitudes and training which we provide ensured all necessary measures where taken to reduce risk to a bare minimum. Our service was so popular at last year's Norfolk Show; the organisers have invited us back again this year.

In summary the benefits this unique business can provide, free green transport, affordable advertising, tourist services, additional jobs as well as supporting charitable causes by providing collection tins for voluntary donations from passengers, far out strip any problems which may occur, which can easily be dealt with by risk management and the experience gained over the last twelve months.

As such I would like to request that the committee would consider granting our pedicabs access to main pedestrian areas in the city centre 'during restricted times', even if it is initially on a trial basis for say a maximum of two pedicabs. This would provide us with the ability to attract more potential sponsors enabling us to make a success of what is effectively a new green concept for Norwich.”

The transportation manager said that it was not in the gift of the committee to grant Mr Maloney's request as there were restrictions on cycling within pedestrianised areas and it would be necessary to amend the traffic regulation orders (TROs). A review of pedestrianised areas was to be carried out over the next two years. This would involve widespread consultation as part of the process and include a review of cycling in the city centre. This request should be part of the wider review as there was no funding for trial TROs and was not justifiable.

During discussion members of the committee generally welcomed the use of pedicabs in principle as a positive move. Councillors Bearman and Read said that they hoped for flexibility and suggested that pedicabs could be introduced on a trial basis rather than wait two years for the review. Councillor Shaw and Bremner said that they liked the idea of pedicabs but expressed concern that the streets were not wide enough for separate cycle lanes. Councillor Plant suggested that there needed to be a business case to support the viability of the pedicab business before he could be satisfied that the scheme could go ahead.

RESOLVED with 3 members voting in favour (Councillors Adams, Plant and Bremner) and 1 member voting against (Councillor Read) to include consideration of the use of pedicabs in pedestrianised roads as part of the wider review, but not to look at the issue in isolation ahead of that review.

Question 2 – Review of Eastern Area controlled parking zone

Mr Nigel Hodge, on behalf of Thorpe Park Residents, asked the following question:

“Following a review of the Eastern area CPZ, Thorpe Park Management Company Ltd reached agreement with Norwich City Council as to a workable scheme to include Thorpe Park within Zone C. This was agenda item 6 on the Norwich Highways Agency Committee meeting of 25 November 2010. This was approved.

This report included three areas; Thorpe Park, Crome Road and Denmark Road. Under financial consequences it was stated £20,000 was already allocated in the 2010-2011 budget, and £10,000 would be required to implement from 2011-2012. We now understand the approved proposals for Thorpe Park have been put ‘on hold’ due to budget constraints.

On behalf of the 325 properties at Thorpe Park, Thorpe Park Management Company Ltd is extremely disappointed and seeks clarification of the reasons to put on hold the agreed scheme.

We would consider it preferable to implement those schemes which already have committee approval rather than earmark funds for future schemes that are not yet agreed or approved by committee.

We would request that the budget is reconsidered to identify funding to implement the extension to the eastern area CPZ to include Thorpe Park. Alternatively if funding is a major obstacle we would suggest funding may be identified to implement part of the scheme in a phased arrangement so that Wilson Road could be implemented as a first stage with double yellow lines

on safety grounds with the remainder of the proposed scheme delayed for the present time until funding permits.”

In response, the transportation manager suggested that this item would be addressed under item 9 (below), *Confirmation of the highway capital improvement programme 2011-12*.

Question 3 – Recreation Road/The Avenues junction

Dr Kenneth Tickle asked the following question:

“What can be done to improve the safety at the Recreation Road/The Avenues junction?”

SAFETY is of utmost importance - it's a very dangerous junction, especially at school times.

To improve the situation, greatly, there seem to be a number of approaches that could be considered:

- Provide bollards (as on most other junctions along The Avenues) to prevent parking on the verges; and/or,
- Provide proper kerb edgings - the present ones are so low that there is practically no barrier to cars and other vehicles mounting the verges. The presence of those vehicles compromises the sight lines for cars coming to the junction and is ruining the verges (it is creating much less than the "Fine City" that it used to be!); and/or;
- Provide double yellow lines from the junction towards the City as far as the small island on The Avenues - presumably the easiest and by far the cheapest option, which would be most effective if policed - even on an irregular basis, since it would then be illegal to park on the verges in that area.”

The transportation manager referred to slides and said that parking around schools was a problem across the city. Bollards and yellow lines did act as a deterrent but there was limited funding for such schemes. The police had no record of accidents at this location and it was therefore not a priority.

During discussion members and Councillor Ramsay, ward councillor for Nelson ward, suggested that there should be better enforcement to deter illegal parking, with civil enforcement officers working with schools to create green travel plans.

The transportation manager said that she would ensure that Recreation Road and the Avenues were given priority for enforcement.

Question 4 - Birkbeck Road and Keyes Road – parking on the verge

Councillor Little asked the following question:

“There has been a long running issue of parking on what was once a completely grassed area on the corner of Birkbeck Road and Keyes Road. The area in question has now largely been reduced to churned mud which, as well as being unsightly and a loss of amenity, also poses a potential safety hazard to passing pedestrians in part due to the fact that there is a considerable gradient onto the adjacent footpath. A solution has been suggested to officers that would involve trees or shrubs being planted to protect most of the area while vehicle access to property would be retained. Can we be assured that the Council will now act to finally resolve this issue?”

The head of city development services said that he was aware of the recent work of local members on this issue and that there were moves to create vehicle crossovers so that residents could park in their own gardens to reduce parking on the verge. He pointed out that it would be difficult to fund the shrubs and trees but opportunities for funding were being looked into.

4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Scutter declared a personal interest in item 7, *Proposed improvements to Newmarket Road/Leopold Road/Eaton Road junction*, below, because he lives in the area.

5. MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2011.

6. NORWICH AREA TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION – DEREHAM ROAD BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) PHASE 1

Two residents and a prospective member of the city council addressed the committee and outlined their concerns about the proposal which included local residents' opposition to the proposal to ban right turns at the Old Palace Road junction; and, that the reduction in travel times was out of proportion to the amount of disruption it would cause local residents and the costs were not justifiable.

During discussion members assured residents that their views would be heard and that the banning of right turns at the Old Palace Road junction element of the scheme would be reviewed. Members also said that the scheme was beneficial to the city and would benefit everyone. It was noted that there had been a lot of consultation on the scheme as part of the development of the Greater Norwich Joint Core Strategy. Councillor Plant considered that the work of the officers had been exemplary and not only benefit the people of Norwich but would help provide a reliable bus service on that side of the city.

The design manager (major projects), Norfolk County Council commented on the issues raised. Further consultation on the review of the proposals for the Old Palace Road junction, which would include Goldsmith Street, would be reported back to the committee at a future meeting. Officers had agreed to meet with residents and local councillors to discuss the options. The scheme was part of the wider preparation to ensure that the transport system for the city was better placed to deal with growth

over the next 20 years. The changes to the Inner Ring Road junction the inbound bus lane would cost around £400,000 to implement.

In response to a question from Councillor Ramsay (Nelson Ward), the design manager (major projects) said the consultation had been widespread, with 2600 leaflets being circulated. He was happy to discuss the format of the future consultation on changes to the Old Palace Road with local councillors.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) Ask officers to review proposals for the Old Palace Road/Heigham Road junction with Dereham Road, taking into account the concerns of the local residents, considering any possible alternative scheme proposals that will secure improvements on bus journey times. The outcome of that work will be reported back to members of this committee at a future meeting.
- (2) Approve for implementation the proposals to:
 - (a) introduce a 24-hour, 7 days a week eastbound bus lane with “no loading at any time” on the Dereham Road between Orchard Street and the junction with Grapes Hill/Barn Road;
 - (b) introduce bus pre-signals to allow the buses to proceed from the bus lane into the right turn lane on the Dereham Road approach to the junction with Grapes Hill/Barn Road;
 - (c) change the operational time of the existing bus lane on Dereham Road, from near Gurney Road to near the Outer Ring Road, to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week;
 - (d) make St Benedict’s Street eastbound only at the junction with Barn Road/Grapes Hill except for cycles;
 - (e) introduction of up to three high quality BRT bus stops;
 - (f) extend the 30mph restriction on Dereham Road by 70m in a westerly direction from the Norwich Road junction.

Note that item c (part of the bus lane, from near Gurney Road to just west of Norwich Road junction) and item f (speed limit) are outside the Norwich Highway Agency area, and hence beyond the remit of this committee. These will need to be implemented under delegated powers by Norfolk County Council but are included for completeness.

- (3) Approve for consultation the proposals to:
 - a) introduce revised car parking arrangements in Exeter Street to provide additional spaces to offset the loss of car parking on Dereham Road caused by the implementation of the bus lane.
- (4) Ask the transportation manager at the city council to initiate the necessary statutory procedures to implement the following Traffic Regulation Orders, subject to delegated powers authorisation where necessary:
 - a) the changes to the waiting and loading restrictions on Dereham Road between Old Palace Road and Barn Road;

- b) the creation of the bus lane on the Dereham Road approach to Grapes Hill/Barn Road junction for use by Buses, Hackney Carriages, Private Hire Vehicles and Pedal Cycles, operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week;
 - c) the proposed change of operational time of the existing bus lane on Dereham Road from near Gurney Road to near the Outer Ring Road for use by Buses, Hackney Carriages, Private Hire Vehicles and Pedal Cycles, operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week;
 - d) the eastbound only operation of St Benedict's Street at it's junction with Grapes Hill/Barn Road, except for Pedal Cycles;
 - e) the creation of Bus Stop Clearways at the BRT stops that are within the Controlled Parking Zone;
 - f) the extension of the 30mph speed limit on Dereham Road by 70m in a westerly direction from near the Norwich Road junction.
- (5) Ask the transportation manager at the city council to advertise the necessary statutory procedures to implement the following Traffic Regulation Orders:
- a) the changes to the car parking arrangements on the southern side of Exeter Street as shown on plan number PA1004-GP-090 in Appendix C.
- (6) Ask officers to report the results of the consultation on the changes affecting the parking in front of the shops to the May meeting, to enable a decision to be made as to the final extent of the bus lane.

(Councillor Plant left the meeting at this stage. Councillor Shaw became the second voting member for the County Council for the remainder of the meeting.)

7. PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO NEWMARKET ROAD/LEOPOLD ROAD/EATON ROAD JUNCTION

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

The transportation manager introduced the report and apologised to the Eaton Ward members for misrepresenting their views in the report. She also pointed out an amendment to the table of representations attached to the report references to comments from residents in Leopold Close had been recorded as being from Leopold Road.

A resident of Upton Close then addressed the committee outlining his objections to the scheme which included concern that the prohibition of the right turn from Newmarket Road (outbound) to Leopold Road would not have much effect in reducing waiting times.

Councillor Lubbock, ward councillor for Eaton Ward, said that whilst she was in favour of the upgrading of the lights at the junction and the widening of the pavement to allow more room for pedestrians, she could not support the scheme to prohibit the right turn from Newmarket Road (outbound) to Leopold Road and the shortening of the inbound bus lane west of the junction of Newmarket Road with Leopold road and Eaton Road as it would not be effective at reducing traffic congestion on the ring road. Prohibiting the right turn to Leopold Road meant that drivers would need to cross two lanes of traffic further up the road where visibility would not be so good.

A resident of Leopold Close also addressed the committee and endorsed what had been said by Councillor Lubbock and said that she considered the proposals “unrealistic”.

Councillor Scutter, as the county councillor representing the Eaton Division, said that he and the 3 ward councillors all supported the upgrade of the traffic lights and associated works but considered that the other proposals in the scheme would not achieve the intended outcomes and therefore rejected the proposals to prohibit the right-turn into Leopold Road and the change in the length of the bus lane. The proposed scheme would not prevent congestion on the ring road and would be detrimental to Upton Road and was not good use of funding. Consideration should be given to alleviating the problems at the junction by cross hatching or extending the phasing of the traffic lights,

Discussion ensued. Members noted the importance of the bus lane in Newmarket Road for buses, taxis and cyclists. However the proposed scheme was not the most effective way of dealing with traffic congestion and the funding could be better used elsewhere. Councillor MacDonald said that City of Norwich School students used the crossing and expressed concern that the upgrading of this junction would increase capacity for pedestrians.

The transportation manager responded to the issues raised by members of the public and members and referred to the report. It would be possible to take some elements of the scheme to improve the crossing at the junction and the cycle provision. This revised scheme was estimated to cost in the region of £50,000.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the elements of the proposed improvements at the Newmarket Road/ Leopold Road/ Eaton Road junction were inappropriate and asked officers to investigate providing just the pedestrian and cycle improvements at the junction, without the proposed banned right turn from Newmarket Road into Leopold Road and the shortening of the bus lane;
- (2) Ask officers to investigate provision of keep clear markings on the Newmarket Road / Daniels Road roundabout.

8. CONTRA-FLOW CYCLING IN THE CITY CENTRE

During discussion the transportation manager answered members' questions. Councillor Bearman welcomed the proposals.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) Note the priorities for future years for the introduction of contra-flow cycling in one way streets set out in appendix 15, to be introduced as and when funding allows;

- (2) Ask the head of city development services to commence public consultation for the introduction of a contra-flow cycle lane in Duke Street between Colegate and St Andrews Cycle Park, as shown on appendix 12.

9. CONFIRMATION OF HIGHWAY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME 2011-2012

(Following the decision not to go ahead with the scheme under item 7, *Proposed improvements to Newmarket Road/ Leopold Road/ Eaton Road junction*, the supplementary report 9a *Proposed improvements to Newmarket Road/ Leopold Road/ Eaton Road junction and capital improvement programme – funding update* report was withdrawn.)

The transportation manager said that as elements of the Newmarket Road scheme were not going ahead there was some flexibility between budgets. A further report to the committee would be required on proposals for improvements to the signalled crossing at the junction of Newmarket Road/ Leopold Road/ Eaton Road. The major projects manager, Norfolk County Council, said that the use of Growth Point funding for the Newmarket Road scheme would no longer be appropriate given the scope of the scheme had been reduced. The head of city development services suggested that proposals for the reallocation of the £50,000 funding no longer being used for the Newmarket Road/Eaton Road scheme would be reported to the next meeting.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) Approve the following funding allocations:
 - (a) Constitution Hill speed cushions on the approach to the zebra crossing - £20,000;
 - (b) Bus stop infrastructure - £25,000;
 - (c) Minor traffic management schemes - £10,000;
 - (d) NATS implementation plan measures:
 - (i) Standardising cycling and loading times in pedestrianised area - £30,000; and
 - (ii) Contra-flow cycle lanes in city centre - £20,000
- (2) Allocate £50,000 to the Newmarket Road / Leopold Road / Eaton Road signal replacement scheme and improvements to the pedestrian facilities at the pedestrian crossing at this junction;
- (3) Consider the reallocation of £50,000 funding from the scaled down Newmarket Road / Eaton Road scheme at the next meeting in relation to allocations of funding for:
 - (a) Annual waiting restrictions implementation;
 - (b) CPZ extensions;
 - (c) Contra flow cycle lanes.

(Councillor Read left the meeting at this point.)

10. TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR PARKING PERMITS AND DISPENSATIONS

RESOLVED, having considered the report of the head of city development services, to approve and adopt the:

- (1) revised terms and conditions for parking permits as set out in appendix 1 of the report; and,
- (2) business rules and conditions of use for parking dispensations as set out in appendix 2 of the report.

11. REGIONAL PERMIT SCHEME UPDATE

The highways network manager Norfolk County Council, introduced the report and together with the head of city development services answered members' questions. Members were advised that the city council had responsibility for highway network management under the terms of the agency agreement and was working with the county council to implement an appropriate permit scheme.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) note that the county council does not propose to take part in the Anglian Sub-Regional Permit scheme;
- (2) approve the proposed approach to develop a potential permit scheme for Norfolk (as set out in the report).

12. EVENTS ON THE HIGHWAY

The highways network manager presented the report.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) Approve Variant D (suggested in paragraph 4.4 of the report) with Fee Regime A (as set out in paragraph 5.1).
The Committee did not recommend any changes to the range or nature of events that are exempt from paying the Council's fees.
The proposals set out in paragraph 6.5 of the report to relax the requirement in respect of public indemnity insurance and allow organisers of local neighbourhood events to decide for themselves whether or not to take out such insurance was supported by Committee.
- (2) Support the county council's cabinet member for travel and transport in making representations to government on changes to legislation, as set out in the report, to further ease the burden on local authorities in the administering the highway approvals.

13. ON STREET PARKING ENFORCEMENT MONITORING REPORT

RESOLVED, having considered the report of the head of city development services, to receive the available performance results and note that income and issuing of penalty charge notices are above budget.

14. HIGHWAY PERFORMANCE MONITORING OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY AGREEMENT

RESOLVED, having considered the report of the head of city development services, to receive and note the available performance results.

15. MAJOR ROAD WORKS – REGULAR MONITORING

RESOLVED, having considered the report of the head of city development services, to note the report.

16. AUDIT OF THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The head of budgeting and financial management, Norfolk County Council, presented the report and answered questions.

RESOLVED to note the change in the audit arrangements detailed within the report and appendices and that there is no longer a requirement to produce a separate Statement of Accounts for the joint Norwich highways agency committee.

17. MEETING SCHEDULE 2011-12

RESOLVED, having considered the report of the head of law and governance, Norwich City Council, to agree the following schedule of meetings for the civic year 2011/2012, all meetings to be at 10.00am and held at City Hall:-

26 May 2011
28 July 2011
15 September 2011
24 November 2011
26 January 2012
22 March 2012
24 May 2012

CHAIR