

SOUTH BUCKS LOCAL COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SOUTH BUCKS LOCAL COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 23 OCTOBER 2000, IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL HALL, BEACONSFIELD, COMMENCING AT 4.00 PM AND CONCLUDING AT 7.10 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT

Council, Organisation or Society	Representative
Buckinghamshire County Council	Mr R S Royston (in the Chair) Mrs A R Bainbridge Mrs P M A Dewar Mr W J Y Chapple Mrs S Lee Mr R Lingham-Wood Mr J H McB Page Mr M W Taylor
Beaconsfield Town Council	Mrs T Rosell
Denham Parish Council	Mrs M Skelton
Farnham Royal Parish Council	Mr W F Foulds
Fulmer Parish Council	Mr M Saxby
Gerrards Cross Parish Council	Mr R Walpole
Hedgerley Parish Council	Mrs B F M Coombs
Iver Parish Council	Mrs C Gibson
South Bucks District Council	Mr J A Greer Mr M Dunlop
Stoke Poges Parish Council	Mr A Day
Taplow Parish Council	Mr J A Pool
Wexham Parish Council	Mrs M E Dunstall
Institute of Advanced Motorists	Mr K N Chanter
Thames Valley Representative	P C A Baverstock

Officers

Buckinghamshire County Council

Mr D Cairney
Mr J Currell
Mr I Duncan
Mr K Moloughney
Mr J Stevens
Mrs H Wayland

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

The Head of Administration reported that apologies had been received from Mr R J Worrall, Buckinghamshire County Council, Mrs Glover, Burnham Parish Council, Mr A J Walker, Gerrards Cross Parish Council and Mr W J Whitehead, Pedestrians Association.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none received.

1 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Local Committee held on Thursday 5 July 2000 were received and agreed.

2 FEEDBACK

The Local Committee received a report, introduced by the Area Manager, which detailed feedback on the South Bucks Local Committee, received from forms sent out with the previous minutes. It was reported that ten forms had been returned and that all feedback received was positive. Nine respondents had stated that they felt the layout and venue worked well, there was adequate opportunity to raise all the points that members wished to raise and that the County Council listened to the points that were raised. The feedback also indicated that Members liked the Fact File style approach to committee report writing, which was shorter with bullet points.

3 ROAD SAFETY PLAN

The Local Committee received a report from the Head of Transportation on the draft Road Safety Plan, which was introduced by Ann James, Road Safety Officer. Ms James referred to the executive summary of the Plan, which was included with the papers and explained that its purpose was to reduce the number of fatal and serious casualties on our roads during the next 10 years, in line with government targets. The Road Safety Plan set out ways in which these targets could be achieved and covered a range of issues in eleven separate sections. Members noted that this was an opportunity to receive early input on the plan which would go out for further consultation later in the year.

The Local Committee split into four workshop groups; each covering particular sections of the Plan discussing the content and highlighting their priorities and those items included which were not felt to be a priority. On reconvening the meeting the following comments were received:

Safer for Children

- All actions listed were considered equally important.
- The use of cycle helmets was highlighted and it was felt important to balance the risk and safety element.
- Education and training for children concerning their behaviour on the roads was highlighted.

Safer Drivers (Training and Testing)

- Investigate costs of pre-driver education – keep the costs down as far as possible to encourage participation;
- Promote the advanced driving test;
- Ask larger employers to encourage employees to take and pass advanced driving tests;
- Lobby the government to lower the CC for cars/bikes;
- Have plates marked “P” for provisional on new drivers cars;
- Raise awareness of these issues through active publicity.

Safer Drivers (Drink, Drugs, Fatigue)

- Target the 18/25 age group – raise awareness, need for ‘bigger sticks’ and heavier penalties for offenders;
- Pre-driver training in schools – consider introducing as part of the curriculum, rather than being voluntary;

Safer Infrastructure

- Maintenance should be carried out as a matter of course;
- Vulnerable road users were considered to be a high priority;

- Learning from Safety Audit processes was considered important;
- Provision for pram pushers should be included;

Safer speeds

- All points included in the Action Plan important and should be included.
- The two points that were felt to be most important were the second bullet point “ensure the best use of available resources by adopting an intelligence – led approach to identify and address the worse casualty areas” and also bullet point four “encourage and support local communities to provide community-funded speed limits and traffic calming”.
- continue developing close working partnership with Thames Valley Police;
- Speed posters could be used – name and shame drivers;
- Licences could be issued for a set period of time before being made permanent;
- Lower speed limits.
- Implement agreed traffic calming schemes to physically reduce vehicle speeds at accident sites.

Safer Vehicles

- All points listed in the Action Plan important with the first priority “assist the Vehicle Inspectorate to carry out spot checks of second hand cars to assess road worthiness”.
- All people should receive advice on buying their first car and the importance of vehicle safety not only young people;
- Concern was raised over "open top" cars.

Safer Motorcycling

- All the points listed in the Action Plan important the first priority “continue to publicise details of local training courses for motorcyclists”.
- Make reference to proper equipment for motorcyclists.

Safety for Pedestrians, Cyclists and Horse Riders

- All actions listed were agreed to be equally important
- Enforcement of undesirable pavement cycling

Promoting Safer Road Use

- Traffic calming by example was highlighted and it was felt that some drivers felt jeopardised by the behaviour of vehicles driving too closely behind them;
- Speed Poster Campaign – very limited success, perhaps it could be more successful if used in conjunction with speed camera sites;
- Continue 10 year speed campaign, monitor in the light of experience and new initiatives, only useful where appropriate speed limits are in force in the first place;
- Repeat driving tests;
- Look at systems in operation in other European countries.
- Attention was drawn to the police's own driving safety record

4 TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT REQUESTS AND PETITIONS

The Local Committee received and noted the report from the Head of Transportation, which set out requests for traffic management measures, of a significant nature, and petitions received, between the period 16 June and 29 September 2000. Members noted and commented on the following:

Fir Tree Avenue, Stoke Poges

A 22-signature petition had been submitted by Stoke Poges Parish Council on behalf of local residents requesting road safety measures for Fir Tree Avenue. The suggestions put forward included:

- traffic calming
- speed limit signs
- speed cameras and speed enforcement.

It was noted that a high priority had been allocated to the road safety measures and a low priority allocated to the provision of speed limit signs. The Member representing Stoke Poges Parish Council suggested that a lower speed limit could be imposed as the road was used as a rat run. It was noted that the request for traffic calming/speed cameras would be assessed as part of the annual review.

West Common, Gerrards Cross

A total of 27 letters had been received from local residents requesting amendments to the existing waiting restrictions and some form of HGV/coach control, be it a weight or width restriction, in West Common. Several letters had also requested traffic calming. During discussion on this item members highlighted the problems of coaches using this route and suggested that this scheme ought to be allocated a higher priority as it appeared to be a major problem for the area.

Fulmer Road, Gerrards Cross

Members noted that a low priority had been allocated to a request for the removal of the existing priority working traffic calming feature in Fulmer Road, Gerrards Cross. Members were advised that allocation of a higher priority would only occur if there was a change in the situation, for example increased reported accident rates or via a community funded scheme. It was reported that removal of the feature would only be considered by the County Council if there was an alternative proposal. Any plans for its removal would also involve consultation with local members. The representative for Gerrards Cross Parish Council advised the group that this had been considered at a meeting of the Parish Council approximately 12 months ago when members were of the opinion that it should not be removed. The representative from Fulmer Parish Council reported that members of the Parish Council had mixed views on its removal. The Chairman suggested that each affected Parish Council obtain an updated view to report to a future meeting and in the meantime it was agreed that the Local Committee recommend that the priority be changed from Low to High.

Denham – Tilehouse Lane and Old Rectory Lane

Members noted that a request had been received from Denham Parish Council for a 30 mph speed limit on these and other rural roads within the Parish and that a low priority had been allocated. A representative from Denham Parish Council stated that people from High Denham had been campaigning for many years for a restriction in the speed limit, particularly in Old Rectory Lane, which had no footpaths was used by children and also by a commercial company for their vehicles and those of their employees. Members were advised that Old Rectory Lane was not wide enough for signs to be erected, it also had hedging on either side which created further problems. It was noted that a fatality had occurred on this stretch of road which had been reported to the Traffic and Road Safety Panel of the County Council and had been allocated a low priority. It was further noted that if there was local concern a community-funded scheme could possibly be achieved. The Chairman suggested that the Parish Council should arrange a site meeting with the Local Area Office to allow Area Staff to explain the technicalities on site and discuss possibilities for community funding.

Burnham – Dropmore Road/High Street/Gore Road/ Britwell Road Crossroads

Members noted a request via the Area Office from elderly and disabled residents for a

controlled crossing. Improvements at this junction would be carried out as part of the development of the High Street scheme which may involve a change in traffic flows and would present the opportunity for a safety crossing at this point. It was noted that this was a difficult junction and at the present time it was physically impossible to undertake any work.

In conclusion, the representative from the Thames Valley Police stated that any requests for a change in speed limits must be appropriate for that area and also be enforceable.

Stoke Poges - Rogers Lane

Members agreed to recommend a change in the priority from Medium to High in view of the current planning application submitted in respect of the school in Rogers Lane.

RECOMMENDED

- 1 That the requests for traffic management measures received be noted and the priorities allocated in Appendix A be agreed, with the exception of Fulmer Road Gerrards Cross and Rogers Lane Stoke Poges which the Committee recommended a High priority;**
- 2 That action proposed in response to the petitions received be agreed;**
- 3 That the priorities allocated, including the recommended changes as set out in 1 above, and action proposed be recommended to the Council and the Chairman of the Environmental Services.**

5 LOCAL SAFETY AND AREA STRATEGY SCHEMES PROGRAMME 2000/01 - UPDATE

The Local Committee received and noted a report from the Head of Transportation on the progress of schemes contained within the current year of the above programme. It was noted that the schemes were split in two parts

- a) Local Safety Schemes - these are schemes proposed to address particular accident record at the site
- b) Area Strategy Schemes - these are schemes that may not have an accident reduction potential but have amenity benefits or are likely to achieve (or contribute to) the aims of the Local Transport Plan.

Members were requested that if they had any schemes for submission these must be made by the end of November 2000.

During discussion, a member thanked the County Council for the signs erected in Gerrards Cross advertising car boot sales which had improved safety along the A40 and noted that they would shortly be removed as it was the end of the season. During the

winter the signs would have drop covers attached which would only be opened when the car boot sales were open.

A member highlighted that accident injury reports did not contain very much information, for example, one accident could involve several cars but this did not feature in the report statistics. Representatives from the Parish and Town Councils were asked to report any accidents that they were aware of, that may not form part of the accident statistics.

RECOMMENDED

- 1 That progress to date on the schemes contained within the current year of the Local Safety and Area Strategies Schemes Programme be noted;**
- 2 That local Councils forward any possible schemes for inclusion in the programme, when it is revised in January 2001, to the Head of Transportation by the end of November 2000.**

6 BUCKINGHAMSHIRE SPEED MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Local Committee received and noted a report from the Head of Transportation on the recently produced Buckinghamshire Speed Management Strategy. The Committee was invited to consider the draft Strategy, which formed part of the Road Safety Plan. It was noted that the summary was in draft and the final version would include photographs. The member from Thames Valley Police advised the Committee that the Police Authority had made formal representations and had been fully consulted on their views. A member from South Bucks District Council expressed concern over the promotion and development of the "Traffic Calming by Example" Publicity Campaign and suggested that this may cause a risk factor to the public and suggested it be removed. In response, it was noted that the statement was only intended to keep road users within the speed limit.

A suggestion was received from a member relating to educating young children on speed issues by supplying schools with books on road safety as part of the curriculum.

In conclusion, members were invited to consult their representative groups and make comments to the Head of Transportation by the end of November 2000.

RECOMMENDED

That Local Councils consult with their representative groups and return comments to the Head of Transportation by the end of November 2000.

7 STRUCTURAL HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE SCHEME SUBMISSIONS – THE LOCAL COMMITTEE DELEGATED BUDGET INTERIM REPORT

The Local Committee received a report, from the Head of Transportation which advised upon:

- a Current progress with this years Structural Maintenance Programme of works and;
- b New schemes submitted by Committee Members for technical and financial assessment and possible inclusion in next year's structural highway maintenance programmes.

A progress report on the Structural Highways Maintenance Programme 2000/2001 was tabled at the meeting. In terms of this year's programme, it was noted that despite a slow start, work on schemes identified was now well underway with all due to be completed by early March 2001. For next year, a list of schemes would be submitted to the meeting in January for the Local Committee to decide upon. It was noted that schemes rated as technically high might be absorbed in the main programme.

Following discussion on this item, a member sought clarification on the meaning of footway slurry. It was noted that this was a thin, black mix containing bitumen and aggregate which was used to resurface footways and remove irregularities in the surface. It could last for at least five years. This dressing was primarily used because it was cost effective to do so in light of budget constraints, was an effective remedy and was usually well received.

RECOMMENDED

That the report be noted.

8 STRUCTURAL HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE SCHEME SUBMISSIONS – CENTRALLY HELD BUDGET INTERIM REPORT

The Local Committee received a report from the Head of Transportation, which advised upon:

- a The outcome of this year's scheme bid to the Highways and Public Transport Sub-Committee, and;
- b Innovative structural highway maintenance schemes received from Committee Members as possible bids for next year's centrally held budget.

It was reported that £29,500 of the funding for the scheme submitted by Beaconsfield Town Council for the refurbishment of the north bound layby on the A355 adjacent to the M40 junction 2 had been had been approved. The total cost of the scheme, following a detailed design assessment from Hyder Consulting, totalled £45,000. South Bucks District Council had confirmed that it would contribute £5,000. In addition, £10,500 was to be made available from the Local Transport Plan Principal Roads Structural Maintenance Budget.

It was noted that the works would commence in the latter part of January and would be completed during the current financial year. It was further noted that verge bollards would be erected along the full length of the western side of the A355 between the two

roundabouts to prevent large vehicles from parking.

In terms of a scheme bid for 2001/2002, it was reported that two requests had been received, one was for the refurbishment of the south bound layby on the A355 Beaconsfield and the second from Gerrards Cross Parish Council relating to the improvement of footways at Packhorse Road and the footway along East Common adjacent to the A40. Both schemes would involve a mixture of maintenance and improvement to make the surfaces better for pedestrians, especially the disabled and elderly. Both of these schemes would be technically assessed by officers and costed and would be submitted to the Local Committee at the January meeting.

The member from Beaconsfield Town Council thanked the Chairman and the Committee for their support for the funding of the layby improvements in Beaconsfield and the County Council for raising the additional funding required.

A member highlighted the sale of refreshments at the layby and requested information following a discussion held at the last Committee meeting. In response it was noted that discussions were taking place between County and District Council officers but that nothing had been resolved at this stage.

Following discussion, the Chairman highlighted the possible use of landfill tax to fund one of these schemes. It was noted that the Ground Works (Thames Valley) Trust had previously attempted a bid which had been unsuccessful. Officers agreed to look again at a possible bid for landfill tax funding in future. The Chairman requested that a report on landfill tax be submitted to a future meeting of the Local Committee.

RECOMMENDED

- 1 That the decisions of the Highways and Public Transport Sub-Committee regarding this year's scheme submission bid be noted; and**
- 2 That the two schemes had been submitted to the Area Manager for technical and financial assessment as possibilities for next year's bid.**
- 3 That a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Local Committee on Landfill Tax.**

9 HIGHWAY TREE POLLARDING SOUTH BUCKS AREA

The Local Committee received a report from the Head of Transportation on highway tree pollarding in the South Bucks area which set out the County Council's approach towards highway tree pollarding and sought the Committee's support to a proposed 10 year programme within the South Bucks area.

It was noted that establishing a 10-year programme of pollarding works would enable the costs to be spread over a number of years and the budgets to be planned accordingly. The costs of carrying out tree pollarding works in any one year would be met from the South

Bucks Area Routine Maintenance Budget. Members noted the six roads identified where pollarding would take place.

During discussion, a Member drew attention to the cycles for pollarding identified for lime trees which differed in the number of years between each pollard. In response, it was noted that officers would seek clarification from the consultant on the reasons but stated that cycles were specific to the avenues in question where the maturity of the trees was different.

RECOMMENDED

- 1. That the approach taken by the County Council with regard to highway tree pollarding be noted;**
- 2. That the proposed 10-year cyclic programme of tree pollarding works within the South Bucks are be supported.**

10 AGENDA ITEMS NOTIFIED BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ADVANCE

The Local Committee received and noted one agenda item, which had been notified in advance since the July meeting. The item had been received from Iver Parish Council and related to illegal parking on footways and the problems that this created for pedestrians, wheelchairs and prams. It asked what could be done to prevent such parking and to raise awareness among drivers of the needs of legitimate footway users. The Committee was advised that parking on footways was covered as a fact sheet in the Environmental Services Fact File. The representative from Thames Valley Police advised members that under the Road Traffic Act it was only an offence to drive on a footway and not for a stationary parked vehicle. In terms of the obstruction it needed to be proved as an actual obstruction rather than a perceived obstruction. If a pedestrian, wheelchair or pram could not physically avoid the vehicle it would constitute an obstruction and the police could be involved in its removal.

11 A TRIAL OPEN DISCUSSION ABOUT LOCAL AREA RELATED ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The Local Committee received and noted a report from the Head of Transportation which invited members to hold a short open discussion on topical environmental issues with officers and other Council members.

A representative from Iver Parish Council again highlighted the problems of parking on footways and emphasised that as part of the Disability Act the County Council must take steps to try to find possible means to prevent the obstruction of footways.

The Chairman advised members that the Motorway Service Area Inquiry would be reconvening in January 2001,* and that pre-inquiry meeting was to take place week beginning 20 October 2000*.

12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting would take place on 25 January 2001 at 4.00 pm. The venue for the meeting was discussed and, a vote was taken on whether to remain in the Council Hall, Beaconsfield or to hold future meetings at the Fitzwilliam Centre, Beaconsfield. It was agreed that the meetings should remain in the Council Chamber, Beaconsfield. Members requested that a schedule of dates for the whole year should be submitted to the next meeting for discussion.

"Post meeting -: Due to technical reasons, the Inspector has put back the reconvening date to 1 May 2001. Pre-inquiry meeting date to be advised.

**MR RODNEY ROYSTON
CHAIRMAN**

CONTACT OFFICER : HELEN WAYLAND (01296) 382590