

WEST CENTRAL AREA COMMITTEE

3 December 2015

7.00 - 10.15 pm

Present: Councillors Cantrill (Chair), Bick, Hipkin, Holt, Holland, Ratcliffe, Cearn, Hipkin and Nethsingha

Cambridge City Council Officers:

Head of Property Services: Dave Prinsep

Urban Growth Project Manager: Tim Wetherfield

Recreation Services Manager: Ian Ross

Green Open Space Manager: Alistair Wilson

Committee Manager: Claire Tunncliffe

Cambridgeshire County Council Officers:

Service Director, Strategy & Development: Bob Menzies

Project Manager, Major Infrastructure Delivery: Richard Preston

Team Leader, Transport Projects, Ashley Heller

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

15/123/WCAC Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Reid and Gehring as they were both in Paris for the Local Government Association regarding climate change talks.

15/124/WCAC Re-ordering of the Agenda

Under paragraph 4.2.1 of the Council Procedure Rules, the Mayor used his discretion to alter the order of the agenda items. However, for ease of the reader, these minutes will follow the order of the agenda.

15/125/WCAC Matters and Actions arising from the Minutes

15/105/WCAC: Heavy goods vehicles on Huntingdon Road: To write to Cambridgeshire Constabulary supporting the need for action, highlighting the distress this issue has caused to residents and stressing the need of enforcement.

Councillor Cantrill informed the Committee that he had written a letter to the Chief Constable of Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Hertfordshire Constabulary supporting the need for action.

Councillor Holland updated the Committee to advise that Sonia Hanson, Traffic Manager, Cambridgeshire County Council, was working with Bedfordshire Police to look at these issues on Huntingdon Road.

15/115/WCAC: Parking on Midsummer Common: To arrange a meeting with residents, Councillor Bick, Alistair Wilson and Jane Connell (Principal Solicitor) to discuss this matter further.

Councillor Bick advised that a meeting had taken place on 27th October with the relevant Officers and members of the public. A number of actions had been raised as an outcome of the meeting which would be shared with the publication of the minutes for this meeting. These actions had been minuted by the Alistair Wilson, Open Space Manager, Cambridge City Council **(ACTION)**.

15/126/WCAC Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were declared.

15/127/WCAC Open Forum

Richard Taylor: Would like to bring to the public's attention how out of date the information on the Jesus Green Association notice board is, with information on display dated November 2014.

Councillor Cantrill advised that this was not a City Council notice board but this would be brought to the attention of the Jesus Green Association **(ACTION)**.

Mr Hallaway: As a disabled (blind) person does Cambridgeshire County Council have any plans to install a pedestrian crossing with audible signals across St Andrews Street?

Councillor Cearns stated that a proposal had been accepted for funding for a feasibility study under the Local Highways Improvement Scheme but as yet no work had been undertaken. This matter would be followed up with the relevant Officers and an update given at the next meeting. There was an ongoing issue of staff capacity to deliver the schemes that received funding approval.

Bev Nicolson: A notice went up ages ago about the zebra crossing on Albion Row but no work has been done yet. When is it due to be installed?

Councillor Hipkin informed the Committee that the Officer responsible for the delivery of the project had left the County Council and there had been problems finding any paper trail. A new survey would be undertaken to determine if a zebra crossing would be required.

Tim Brown: When will the Police seriously enforce the one-way cycle ways in the City. I am appalled at how the law is being flouted.

Councillor Cantrill replied that at the last meeting of the West Central Area Committee that the Police priority of Traffic Junction Enforcement (which included cyclists) had been set. An update would be given by the Police at the next meeting when this matter could be discussed further.

Bev Nicolson: What has happened to the progress on Chestnut House? (Corner of Huntingdon Road and Histon Road.) Going past it it's clear it hasn't been completed yet as the windows have not been finished, nor is the facing to the lower half of the building.

Councillor Hipkin responded that the facing material on the ground floor was not of an appropriate quality when it was first put on the building so it had been removed and had left 'glue scars'. The windows had not been completed as they were associated with the facing material problem. The issue was being looked at by the City Council's Enforcement Team.

Bev Nicolson: I note the committee is asked to recommend funding to shore up the sides of the paths on Parker's Piece. It's been very noticeable in the past year that the grass gets churned up quite badly, so will reinforcement help to reduce that?

Councillor Bick advised that the question highlighted a broader problem on Parker's Piece with the grass becoming churned up due to the impact of the large events that took place on the Piece. One such event was the ice rink that was installed each year over the Christmas period, known as the 'North Pole Experience'. Residents were encouraged to give feedback on this event. It was important to ensure that a balance was met so that the Piece could be enjoyed by those who used the ice rink and those who used the Piece all the year round.

Councillor Gillespie supported the points raised by Councillor Bick and highlighted damage had also been caused on the Piece by the Student's Fresher's Fair.

Councillor Cearns stated that there seemed to be an encroachment on what was acceptable and that care was required to limit any damage. Additional funding had been allocated from Cambridgeshire County Council for repairs to the paths.

Member of the public: At the top of the Queens Road Site of the ‘Backs’ at the entrance to Trinity College, a temporary car park had been put in during the construction work but this now seemed to have become permanent. When would the car park be taken down?

Councillor Nethsingha advised that she would investigate this matter and report back at the next meeting **(ACTION)**.

Councillor Holt: Please could we have a co-ordinated set of seats / benches across the city for elderly people who come into the City on the bus but need a ‘sit down’ before they go home.

Councillor Cantrill advised that as part of the City Council’s Environmental Improvement Scheme additional seating had been installed in the Newnham Ward approximately one year ago. This idea could be forward for the next round of bids for funding under this scheme.

Councillor Holland: Wished to bring to the Committee’s attention that a cyclist who had a collision with a coach on Trumpington Road had very sadly passed away. Coaches should not be permitted into the City.

Councillors echoed the concerns of Councillor Holland and welcomed comments from Councillor Bick that this was a bigger issue with an urgent need to bring forward an improved traffic management plan for coaches/ buses/ large vehicles and tourists, which would be evaluated by the City Deal. However there would always be a need for coaches and buses into the City but improved safe cycle routes were also needed. It was also suggested that tourist coaches should be made to use the Park and Ride sites.

15/128/WCAC Cambourne to Cambridge Bus Priority Proposals

The Chair welcomed Ashley Heller, Team Leader Transport Projects, Cambridgeshire County Council who gave a presentation on the Cambourne to Cambridge Bus Priority Proposals, advising the consultation had now finished.

Mr Heller described the route into Cambridge down Madingley Road as 'unreliable' and advised with further economic development the unreliability would increase. The modelling data showed that there was significant congestion starting at Madingley Mulch, which would get worse if nothing was done. The Park & Ride will encourage car drivers to access the City in buses and help to reduce the congestion along the route.

The Committee were then shown the six options that had been put forward for consultation and the business case explained.

Comments from the Committee:

- i. Specified that the environmental impact of the scheme had been ignored.
- ii. Stated that the proposals could not be described as visionary.
- iii. Proposal should be put forward with solutions; it was not good enough to say that any scheme taken forward would need to be mitigated.
- iv. Disappointed that there had been no feedback from the consultation given at the meeting.
- v. Public engagement was important and further engagement should be encouraged when looking at the preferred schemes.
- vi. Important to look at the way that ideas were presented to the public and have a design that people could be inspired by.
- vii. Enquired if the bus lane shown on some of the proposals were for a guided bus or a standard bus.
- viii. Questioned if there were any consideration of a small shuttle bus service.
- ix. Asked what form of energy the buses would be using.

In response to comments from the public and the Committee the Team Leader, Transport Projects, responded with the following:

- i. The project was very early in the process in engagement with the public and would be developed.
- ii. Further technical work would then be undertaken derived from the consultation and reported back the City Deal in September followed by further public consultation.
- iii. Confirmed that if alternative modes of transports were put forward for consideration this would be looked at but had to be realistic in what could be delivered

- iv. Advised that due to the size of the City and the fairly low density of population this had to be taken into account and a bus way system would be the most efficient.
- v. Buses were seen as the way forward to cut congestion in the City, fewer vehicles would reduce traffic pollution.
- vi. To use smaller shuttle buses would mean an increase in the number of buses of that size to bring people into the City.
- vii. The first fully electric double-decker bus would be soon be in service to trail in London as transport authorities try to reduce the capital's air pollution levels which was being looked at with interest.
- viii. Stage Coach had bid for Government funding as part of its plan to overhaul its existing double decker fleet with new low-emission, hybrid buses which would see a reduction in emissions.
- ix. Cambridgeshire County Officer had looked at the electric buses which commenced operations in Milton Keynes in 2014. These were part of a pilot project supported by the UK Department of Transport assessing the viability of electricity powered vehicles in public transport.

Councillor Cantrill thanked Ashely Heller for his time and looked forward to the results of the first phase public consultation.

15/129/WCAC S106 Priority-Setting: West/Central Area Project Proposals

The Committee received a report from the Urban Growth Project Manager regarding the local project proposals received during the S106 bidding round between June to August 2015. Proposals were invited for projects that could help mitigate the impact of development in Cambridge through funding from generic, off-site developer contributions.

Comments from the public:

- i. Queried if the reinforcing of the grass edges to paths across Parker's Piece would be successful long term; this was a large amount of expenditure (up to £75,000) for this project.

Comments from the Committee:

- i. Requested if an update could be given on the Histon Road public art project.

- ii. Highlighted the success of St Augustine's Community Centre and the installation of a new kitchen at St Mark's funded by S106 devolved funding, which had helped to increase usage of both buildings.
- iii. Noted how successful the installation of the solar studs on Lammas Land had been for a small amount of S106 funding.
- iv. Suggested a trim trail on Grantchester Road as part of the devolved outdoor sports contribution which would be considered at the next West Central Area Committee.
- v. Noted the proposals for the hockey pitches at the University of Cambridge Sports Ground on Wilberforce Road would be reported to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee in March 2016 and questioned if planning permission was required before S106 could be requested.
- vi. Expressed disappointment there had been no discussion with Ward Councillors regarding the possible work on Parker's Piece due to the possibility of additional street furniture, ie the new fences/fenceline extensions on the land.
- vii. Enquired why cycling safety on Storey's Way had not been included in the report.
- viii. Asked why Shelley Row play area had been included in the recommendations.

In response to comments from the public and the Committee the Urban Growth Project Manager responded with the following:

- i. Page 22 of the agenda pack, appendix B, referred to the Histon Road public art project with installation expected in Winter 2015/16 (ie, between December 2015-February 2016).
- ii. Paths on Parker's Piece would be re-layed by the County Council, with a new drainage system being introduced which had proved successful on Midsummer Common.
- iii. Projects could be put forward for S106 funding before any planning permission needed was secured. Officers would expect the issue of planning permission to be addressed at the project appraisal stage (so S106 funding could not be confirmed and the appraisal would not be approved unless the necessary planning permission had been secured).
- iv. With regards to the proposal to reinforce the grass edges to paths across Parker's Piece, Councillors had not been consulted yet as this was currently a proposal, which was being reported to the Area Committee for consideration. If the Area Committee wished to select the proposal as one of its S106 local project priorities, there would be further opportunities for consultation as part of the project appraisal process.

- v. The cycling safety project on Storey's Way had been considered by the Community Services Scrutiny Committee in October 2015, but was not prioritised by the Executive Councillor. There were no S106 public realm contributions from the West Central Area. This was a highways issue and officers had drawn the proposal to the attention of colleagues at Cambridgeshire County Council.
- vi. Improvements to Shelley Row play area had been recommended to make use of S106 play area contributions from Castle ward before a May 2017 expiry date. The council's recent play area audit had shown that, whilst the play area had scored highly (74%) for its location, its play value rating (37%) was low. In comparison, Histon Road Recreation Ground already had a high play value of 91%.

The Committee:

Resolved unanimously agreed to:

- i. Prioritise the following local project proposals for the use of devolved S106 contributions from the West/Central Area, subject to project appraisal and community use agreement (where appropriate):
 - a. up to £45,000 outdoor sports S106 funding for an upgraded tennis court on Lammas Land;
 - b. up to £1,500 informal open space S106 funding for a bench on the green at Warwick Road, subject to Cambridgeshire County Council consent;
 - c. up to £1,500 informal open space S106 funding for a bench next to Coton footpath (near its junction with Wilberforce Road), subject to land-owner consent;
 - d. up to £75,000 informal open space S106 funding for reinforcing grass edges to paths across Parker's Piece;
 - e. £35,000 play area S106 funding and up to £15,000 informal open space S106 funding for improvements to Shelley Row play area;
 - f. £10,000 play area S106 funding and up to £5,000 informal open space S106 funding for added play equipment, benches and landscaping at Christ's Pieces play area.
- ii. Consider a follow-up report to the West/Central Area Committee in February 2016, setting out proposals to enable any outstanding devolved S106 contributions with expiry dates in 2017 to be used on time.

Committee Managers Note: County Councillors Nethsingha and Cearn's did not take part in the vote.

15/130/WCAC Histon and Milton Road Proposals

The Chair welcomed Bob Menzies, Cambridgeshire County Council (Service Director, Strategy & Development) and Richard Preston (Project Manager, Major Infrastructure Delivery) who gave a presentation on the upgrade of Milton Road and Histon Road which would see bus, cycling and walking improvements.

The Service Director gave an overview of the City Deal decision making process and which local authorities were involved including the University of Cambridge and how the schemes would be taken forward. As part of the City Deal funding this would allow new public transport infrastructure in and around the City but would require the development and implementation of the schemes quickly.

The Project Delivery Manager explained the detail of the scheme and process. It was reiterated that none of the proposals put forward for Histon Road and Milton had been approved, but approval had been given to go to public consultation. The following objectives were then explained:

- Comprehensive priority for buses in both directions wherever practicable.
- Additional capacity for sustainable trips to employment/education sites
- Increased bus patronage and new services
- Safer and more convenient routes for cycling and walking, segregated where practical and possible
- Maintain or reduce general traffic levels
- Enhance the environment, streetscape and air quality.

Below are some of the questions / statements that were put forward by members of the public and the Committee.

Comments from the public:

- i. Queried if the consultation meetings would be open to the public that had been planned with Councillors and stakeholders; who were the stakeholders as local residents had not been invited to take part.
- ii. Asked if there was still time for members of the public to have input on the consultation before it went public.

- iii. Questioned if the full tree condition surveys would be published as part of the additional information before the public consultation took place.
- iv. Asked what would be the impact on closing some of the proposed junctions and having an outside bus lane.
- v. Would the use of the new train station in the North of the City be promoted encouraging people to take the train rather than the bus.
- vi. Asked where was the evidence to show that the traffic lights system required changing.
- vii. Queried what was the issue trying to be solved; it appeared to be an engineering problem but the problem was much bigger such as traffic management problems and the consultation process did not allow for broader comments.
- viii. Would have an environmental impact with the loss of trees and increase in traffic pollution.
- ix. Issues raised by the Cambridge Cycling Campaign had been ignored; there had been no design input from the people who understood cycling; the design of the junctions was of concern.
- x. The design appeared to accommodate more traffic on the highways and would have been better to have a solution that limits the traffic.
- xi. Additional lanes could increase risk to cyclists.
- xii. The junction close to Arbury Junction was narrow and unsure if this could accommodate additional traffic lane.
- xiii. There has been a significant lack of public information on the proposals.
- xiv. Noted that there were currently dropped kerbs for residents to enter their properties and asked how this would be managed.
- xv. Resident's gardens would have to be reduced in size to allow Milton Road to be widened.
- xvi. The proposals appeared to support the new residential developments outside of the City.
- xvii. There was not enough time for the public to consider these proposals and the consultation period should be extended.
- xviii. Information on the website was hard to understand and would take time to digest.

Comments from the Committee:

- i. The introduction of additional lanes on Milton Lane would not have a positive impact on reducing the amount of traffic into the City and needs to be readdressed.
- ii. Plans showed that the cyclists would have to go past allocated parking spaces.

- iii. Stated that a Dutch style road layout would give cyclists much more safety especially at junctions and should be considered further.
- iv. Asked for the consultation and questionnaire to be put into a language that would easily be understood by all members of the public and not full of technical terminology.
- v. Lack of information on process.
- vi. Suggested that residents formed a residents association which would be recognised as a relevant stakeholder in this process.

In response to comments from the public and the Committee the Urban Growth Project Manager responded with the following:

- i. It had been the decision of the City Deal Executive Board to take the consultation forward.
- ii. Two briefings would take place the following week with a session for Councillors consisting of City, District, Ward, County and South Cambridgeshire, to ensure that they understood the process that was being undertaken.
- iii. Stakeholders consisted of resident groups and the Cambridge Cycling Campaign group that would be able to share the information further afield; it had not been logistically possible to invite all residents to the briefings.
- iv. Cambridge Cycling Campaign Group would continue to be involved in the process.
- v. There would be a series of public events which residents could attend, printed material would be distributed and information could be found on the following website: <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/citydeal/>
- vi. All comments and suggestions would be noted.
- vii. Tree condition survey would be published by the time public consultation started.
- viii. The designs were currently ideas and further detailed work was required to determine how the junctions would work.
- ix. Would want members of the public to put forward all views and ideas, the consultation did allow for the basis of the scheme to be challenged and taken back to the Executive Board. There was space on the consultation that allowed members of the public to put forward different ideas.
- x. The key elements on the local plan and the City Deal were to protect the green belt around the city whilst ensuring sustainable growth in an organised way.
- xi. Enterprise Zones had been announced in Northstowe and Cambourne outside of the City and part of the City Deal strategy was to encourage businesses to locate outside of the City.

- xii. If the consultation highlighted that there is a traffic management issue there would have to be a different agenda.
- xiii. The proposals were not intended to accommodate extra capacity but to improve the flow of traffic.
- xiv. Would continue to work closely with the Cambridge Cycling Campaign.
- xv. Opportunities for open spaces had been identified on Milton Road but the space could be used for other uses.
- xvi. Ideas for Milton Road / Elizabeth Way junction had been passed to consultants for further consideration.

Councillor Cantrill thanked both Bob Menzies and Richard Preston for their time. He then encouraged residents to attend City Deal meetings such as the 'City Deal Executive Board' which was open to the public and where residents could register to speak at the meetings and listen to the debate. Further information could be found at <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/citydeal/>

Councillor Cantrill concluded that it may be beneficial to arrange a public meeting chaired by City Councillor Lewis Herbert, as Chair of the City Deal Board and residents (diary permitting) to discuss the proposals further **(ACTION)**.

15/131/WCAC Record of Attendance

- i. 43 members of the public
- ii. 9 Councillors
- iii. 5 City Officers
- iv. 3 Cambridgeshire County Officers

The meeting ended at 10.15 pm

CHAIR