

NORTH AREA COMMITTEE

5 September 2019

6.30 - 8.55 pm

Present

Area Committee Members: Councillors Bird (Chair), Collis, Dalzell, Price, Sargeant, Sheil, Smart, Tunnacliffe, Manning and Meschini

Officers:

Head of Housing: David Greening

Enforcement Team Manager: Nick Kester

Committee Manager: James Goddard

Other Officers in Attendance:

British Transport Police Inspector Gary Pinner

Operations Manager for the Outer West portion of Anglia Route: Clare Webb

Route Level Crossing Manager for West Anglia: John Prest

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

19/20/NAC Welcome, Introduction and Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors McQueen, O'Reilly, Richards, Scutt, Thittala and Todd-Jones.

19/21/NAC Declarations Of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

19/22/NAC Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

19/23/NAC Matters and Actions Arising from the Minutes

The Action Sheet was noted and an updated copy could be viewed at the following link under 'Committee Action Sheet'.

Re-Ordering Agenda

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

19/24/NAC Open Forum

Members of the public asked a number of questions, as set out below.

1. A member of the public raised the following issue:

Agenda item 4 Matters arising 19/5/NAC Q1

Air Quality Histon Road

The following representation from HRARA was stated in the TRO Consultation without a reply (page 79 of 183 in the Agenda for GCP Joint Assembly 12th September 2019). It was a follow up of the Executive Board decision to introduce Air Pollution controls before, under and after the construction phase. Since no implications could be found among the TROs in the Consultation HRARA asked:

Histon Road TRO Consultation PR0564, 31 July 2019

AIR Pollution monitoring on Histon Road before, during and after the road construction (GCP Executive Board decision) PR0564

HRARA requests clarification regarding the positioning of the air pollution monitoring equipment on the TROs presented for the full length of Histon Road. No markings can be found on the latest design. Alternatively, Automatic Number Plate Recognition ANPR in combination with systems for analysing data collected was suggested to obtain a better quality of results. No markings can be found for such equipment.

Have the “Zero Carbon” promises by Councillor Lewis Herbert, chair GCP EB, been included in the GCP project for Histon Road? Will any part of Histon Road have “Clean Air Zone” CAZ signage?

With only a few weeks until the construction of the road starts it seems logical that data and analysis should already have started. The update reply is not satisfactory and should be more precise.

HRARA requests that the date for “BEFORE” studies starts NOW. And that the data is displayed and easily available to the public.

For your information:

The following Question was raised earlier at the GCP Executive Board on March 20th 2019, Agenda Item 4 and received positive.

Air Quality on Milton Road and its impact on Surrounding Roads including Histon Road

The Greater Cambridge Partnership supported and part-funded the Smart Cambridge project. It sought to collect and analyse air quality monitoring data from across the city using innovative sensing stations developed with the University of Cambridge Chemistry Department. The “Smart City” data collection platform already exists and measurements could be made publicly available.

HRARA supports the proposal that monitors be placed at two or three locations along Milton Road to compare results before, during and after the construction phase. HRARA supports this proposal because an objective of the Milton Road Project is to improve air quality, and the air quality of Milton Road affects the surrounding roads including Histon Road.

HRARA further observes that, similarly, one of the objectives of the Histon Road project is to improve air quality and air quality of Histon Road. This affects the surrounding roads including Milton Road. It would make sense for monitors to be placed at two or three locations along Histon Road to compare results before, during and after the construction phase. This will complement the Milton Road Project and impact directly upon it.

HRARA requests that in recognising the objective to improve air quality is an aim of the Milton Road Project and the air quality of Milton Road and Histon Road are directly linked, the Greater Cambridge Partnership directs the Milton Road Project Manager to implement the proposal that monitors be placed at two or three locations along Milton Road and further directs the Histon Road Project Manager similarly effect plans for air quality monitoring for Histon Road before, during and after the construction phase and ensure budget for this purpose.

Furthermore, could the data be displayed and made easily available to the public?

Action Point: Councillors Manning and Sargeant undertook to raise question from HRARA (regarding Histon Road air quality) with Paul Van de Bulk, GCP Officer.

2. A member of the public raised the following issue:

Matters arising A. 19/16/NAC and B. 18/63/NAC Q1

- A. Regarding temporary Traffic Regulation Order TRO Histon Road
- B. Regarding previous Thundering HGVs matters

Had received a response from Highways England or the County Highways. There was a lack of capacity for the police to enforce the TRO nor do they have any resources to do so. HARA took issue with the response and thought technological solutions could replace policing in such instances.

- 1. Automatic Number-Plate Recognition ANPR. Look at the county councillor from Bottisham on his private land by COOP. It was installed over night, cars were caught and fined. There were complaints about signage but that can be solved. No need for the police on the ground. Use for trucks diverting from the dedicated route. Generates income.
- 2. Average speed limit system used on e.g. motorways SPECS using ANPR. Control of speed limit. Generates income.
- 3. Geofencing has already been discussed.

The reduced night time HGV traffic during the closure of the inbound lane in the first phase of the Histon Road Project construction work as envisaged by GCP is not likely to happen as GCP at the same time states that the open lane will have no restrictions.

HRARA requests that the North Area Committee initiates investigations with the officers of the abovementioned non-policing-enforcement ANPR and SPECS to ensure that the residents along Histon Road will have less Air and Noise Pollution as well as less damage to their property.

North Area Committee noted the question.

3. A member of the public raised the following issues:

- i. Remodelling of the Queen Edith's Way and Fendon Road roundabout would soon occur.
- ii. This would impact on the only direct bus routes from East/West Chesterton to Addenbrooke's.
- iii. Queried if councillors were aware of the seven month road closure by the County Council.
- iv. Asked what action councillors would take to lobby the County Council to ensure bus routes remained open now and in future.

Councillor Bird said:

- i. The County Council had not informed people in advance of the road closure.
- ii. Residents would be adversely affected. They would need to take several bus trips across town instead of just one. The alternative would be to book a taxi, but not everyone could afford this.
- iii. The County Council should put a Traffic Regulation Order in Nightingale Avenue to allow buses to use it.

Councillor Sargeant said:

- i. He had raised the issue with the Greater Cambridge Partnership.
- ii. Stagecoach had noticed a drop in passenger numbers as a result of road works. Ironically short term road works to improve public transport are reducing demand for it.

4. A member of the public raised the following issues:

- i. Queried how to monitor air quality in Milton Road when road works occurred in future.
- ii. Expressed safety concerns about shared space for cyclists and pedestrians.

Councillor Sargeant encouraged members of the public to attend and lobby the Greater Cambridge Partnership Assembly and Board meetings in September.

5. A member of the public raised the following issues:

- i. The Chesterton Festival went well on 22 June.
- ii. Reported the toilets on Chesterton Rec were in a poor state of repair. They needed to be thoroughly cleaned of detritus and discarded needles before the festival started. The toilets became dirty again during the day. Cleanliness was the responsibility of the City Council.

Councillor Bird said:

- i. She was present at the festival.
- ii. There were issues with the male and female toilets, plus the disabled toilet was locked (so unusable).
- iii. She followed up issues with officers and got an undertaking from the Executive Councillor for Climate Change, Environment and City Centre to have the toilets cleaned and a RADAR lock installed on the disabled toilet.

Action Point: Councillor Bird undertook to ascertain condition of toilets on Chesterton Recreation Ground as this has been unsatisfactory in the past.

6. A member of the public raised the following issues:
- i. Arbury Road cycleways would be completed early September. Welcomed this facility.
 - ii. Queried if there were any updates on pending cycleways.
 - iii. Expressed surprise there was no publicity that cycleways were open.

Councillor Manning said there had been many meetings between officers and residents. There was no firm timetable for completing pending cycleways in Arbury Road.

7. A member of the public said the red coating on cycleways made it difficult to cycle on them.

Action Point: Councillor Sargeant undertook to liaise with Greater Cambridge Partnership about the condition of red surfacing on cycleways. The coating can be difficult to cycle on in places.

19/25/NAC Environmental Report - NAC

The Committee received a report from the Enforcement Team Manager.

The report outlined an overview of the council's Streets and Open Spaces, Environmental Health and Shared Waste service activity in the Area Committee area over the past six months.

In response to Members' questions the Enforcement Team Manager said the following:

- i. The council prosecuted people for fly tipping, as well as issuing fixed penalty notices. On average there were fifty prosecutions for fly tipping and non-payment of associated fines.

Action Point: Enforcement Team Manager undertook to send detailed figures showing the number of prosecutions for fly tipping (as opposed to fixed penalty notices).

- ii. Recycling centre bins were managed by the Waste and Fleet Team.

Action Point: Enforcement Team Manager undertook to confirm how often recycling centre bins are emptied by the Waste and Fleet Team.

- iii. An anti-fly tipping campaign was being undertaken in hotspots including communal recycling points. Officers collected evidence, then marked rubbish with stickers. It was the responsibility of the Streets and Open Spaces Team to remove rubbish, this could take five to seven working days.

Action Point: Councillor Collis to follow up issue of fly tipping in communal recycling points in King's Hedges eg Sackville Close and Arundel Close. Also clean up times as rubbish can be left for some time with stickers on saying officers aware.

- iv. The law clearly states actions the City Council could take in regard to vehicles that have been reported to be abandoned. The City Council could not touch (licensed and insured) vehicles that owners claimed to be aware of (if parked legally on the highway). Unlicensed vehicles were reported to the DVLA. Unregistered vehicles could be removed and crushed.
- v. The City Council received circa five hundred abandoned vehicle reports. Some of these were vexatious/malicious but had to be investigated when logged on the system.
- vi. Residents and Councillors were asked to report abandoned vehicles online for the council to log and investigate.
- vii. Witness statements from officers or members of the public are required to take action against fly tippers. If not, the council was only able to clear up rubbish.

Action Point: Enforcement Team Manager undertook to liaise with Enforcement Officers regarding fly tipping by contractors on Gilbert Road.

- viii. 'Resident parking' signs could obstruct grass cutting as they were not always positioned in the best locations.

Action Point: Enforcement Team Manager undertook to liaise with grass cutting operative to ascertain if any residents' parking signs obstruct the cutting of grass verges. Issues to be feedback to County Council who were responsible for sign locations.

19/26/NAC Network Rail update - Fen Road Crossing

The Committee received verbal presentations from three officers.

The Operations Manager's presentation outlined:

- i. The crossing barrier down time was being investigated as it was down 33 minutes in every hour. This was of concern so the issue had been raised at Group Director level.
- ii. There were no quick fixes as different needs had to be balanced:
 - a. Safe freight/rail traffic.
 - b. Road, bike and pedestrian traffic.
- iii. The crossing was operated by CCTV signal, which made it one of the safest types of crossing barriers.

The Route Level Crossing Manager's presentation outlined:

- i. Risk assessments had been undertaken on barriers and down times.
- ii. Down times were influenced by throughput from Fen Road and Cambridge North.
- iii. Options to mitigate crossing barrier down time were being investigated, including closing Fen Road (which was not desirable).

The British Transport Police Inspector's presentation outlined:

- i. Fen Road level crossing had been affected by anti-social behaviour such as trespassing.
- ii. Asked residents to log issues with the police by calling 101 to build up data.
- iii. People had lost confidence in response times due to delays when calls were passed from the Police to the British Transport Police. These were caused by complicated jurisdiction issues as it had to be clarified which was the most appropriate body to respond.

Members of the public made the following comments in response to the presentation:

- i. Barrier down times led to anti-social behaviour as people sped across the road (vehicles, cycles and pedestrians) to compensate for delays.
- ii. Asked for a cycle bridge over Fen Road to access Cambridge North Station.

In response to questions from members of the public the British Transport Police Inspector, Operations Manager and Route Level Crossing Manager said:

- i. CCTV footage was available for signallers to watch to ensure the crossing was clear before a train comes through. Cameras did not display pictures on signallers' screens until a train was near a barrier, as signallers had other duties to perform, and should not be distracted.
- ii. If an incident occurred at a barrier, recorded CCTV could be reviewed. (This may not cover 24/7 period, just when barriers were down.) Signallers were based in the same building as the British Transport Police.
- iii. CCTV at barriers was not positioned so it could also record (when operating) any incidents in Fen Road. The location of CCTV would be reviewed in future as part of overall network needs.
- iv. The Operations Manager had been recruited in 2017 to ensure CCTV was monitored by signallers. There had been an incident before 2017 when CCTV had not been monitored, hence her being recruited to ensure panels were staffed at all times.
- v. Crossing barrier down time was affected by the design of Cambridge North Station. The Operations Manager had submitted a business case in the last three weeks to amend the layout of Cambridge North Station. The issue was actively being raised with Network Rail at a senior level. Progress could be reported back to North Area Committee in future.
- vi. Not all things were within the gift of Network Rail to control. The behaviour of train and vehicle drivers could affect barrier down time. Regular management meetings reviewed issues.
- vii. There was no new technology to upgrade the crossing to reduce barrier down time. If issues could not be addressed, road closure was the next option to consider, other options were also being reviewed.
- viii. The Foxton crossing barrier was down longer than Fen Road.
- ix. Re-iterated earlier plea that members of the public should report issues to the police. Resources were put into areas where issues were reported based on database statistics. The British Transport Police, Network Rail and Cambridgeshire Police aimed to work together in a more holistic approach in future.

- x. A business case was required to install 24/7 CCTV at the Fen Road crossing (like Teversham). This would need to be evidence based built up from issues reported (by residents or witnesses). An automatic number plate recognition CCTV van was occasionally positioned in Fen Road.
- xi. Would contact Greater Anglia to request pruning of trees that obscured signs for Cambridge North Station.

Councillor Manning said he was Chair of the Committee that considered Cambridge North Station:

- i. The original County Council planning application for Cambridge North was taken over by Network Rail.
- ii. A bridge over the crossing, amongst other ideas including integrating with the Chisholm Trail, were discussed as part of the project. Network Rail changed the borrowing mechanism that funded the station to use what is called RAB – Regulatory Asset Base – essentially where Network Rail borrows against the value of its own assets. The issue with this was RAB money could only be spent on Network Rail owned land, so things that weren't entirely on Network Rail land such as the bridge and links with the Chisholm Trail, could no longer be considered.

Further Councillor Manning said that:

- iii. He has submitted a proposal to Govia Thameslink's "Passenger Benefit Fund" to fund a feasibility study into a car, cycle and pedestrian access bridge over Fen Road and the Railway line, north of the current level crossing.
- iv. In response to an audience question: There was no (current) proposal to extend the guided busway across Ditton Meadows. This was a historic idea that had been discounted back in the 90s, when planning permission was given to two houses at the end of Cam Causeway.

The Route Level Crossing Manager asked for details from Councillor Manning so these could be passed onto senior Network Rail personnel to discuss.

In response to the above, and Councillor Smart's concern that action should be taken before a fatality occurred on the Fen Road crossing, the Operations Manager said:

- i. All speakers tonight had attended incidents where people had died.
- ii. They attended committee tonight to hear issues and reassure delegates that processes were already in place to take action.

- iii. The aim was to influence Senior Managers and Directors to replace Fen Road crossing with a better one. Also Greater Anglia who were responsible for Cambridge North.

A member of the public said a cycleway to Cambridge North Station would open soon. Councillor Bird said she had contacted the County Council to say a crossing was needed across Fen Road. The Highways Authority said speed limit was 20mph on Fen Road so a crossing was not needed. Councillor Bird thought this was an inappropriate response and would follow up.

The meeting ended at 8.55 pm

CHAIR

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