

## HERTFORDSHIRE HIGHWAYS WATFORD JOINT MEMBER PANEL

**22 MARCH 2012**

Present: County Councillor Giles-Medhurst (Chair)  
Borough Councillor Wylie (Vice Chair) (for minute numbers 41 to 48)  
County Councillors Bell, Brandon, Scudder and Watkin  
Borough Councillors I Sharpe (for minute numbers 41 to 48),  
J Dhindsa, S Johnson and S Rackett

Also present: Borough Councillors Khan and Martins (for minute numbers 37 to 41)  
Peter Johns, Petitioner (for minute numbers 37 to 41)

Officers: David Swan, Hertfordshire Highways, District Manager  
Andrew Melville, Hertfordshire Highways, Assistant District  
Manager  
Stewart Liddle, Hertfordshire Highways, Development  
Control Manager  
Jane Custance, Watford Borough Council, Head of Planning  
Jodie Kloss, Watford Borough Council, Committee and  
Scrutiny Support Officer

### 37 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Borough Councillor Brown.

### 38 **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS (IF ANY)**

There were no disclosures of interest.

### 39 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2012 were submitted and signed.

### 40 **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

### 41 **PETITIONS, TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS AND LOCAL ISSUES**

The Panel received a report of the District Manager setting out the current status of petitions, information on any objections to Traffic Regulation Orders and other local issues.

### Petition- Rosslyn Road

The Chair, County Councillor Giles-Medhurst, invited the Petitioner, Mr Johns, to present a petition relating to waiting restrictions on Rosslyn Road. Mr Johns said that he was the Chair of Crakers Mead Ltd which was the block of flats opposite the Gade Car Park. The petition asked that the double yellow lines removed in 2009 be reinstated. Visitors to the night-time economy now parked on the single yellow lines rather than in the Gade Car Park to avoid paying. Before the single yellow lines were introduced there was no reason for revellers to pass through Rosslyn Road. Nuisance was caused by inconsiderate parking, litter, noise and congestion. There was a concern that access to the care homes by emergency vehicles could be hindered. The petition had been signed by 73 residents; everyone who was asked signed the petition.

The Chair noted that at the time that Rosslyn Road was changed to single yellow lines, Upton Road had had double yellow lines added.

The District Manager thanked the petitioner and reported that he had not yet had a response from the Police who had originally requested the change. He was happy to press the Police again. Coaches were intended to park in Rosslyn Road and consideration would need to be given about where they could go. Officers would investigate the issue.

Borough Councillor Martins said that as a ward councillor he had had numerous complaints about residents being unable to access their properties. He noted the antisocial behaviour associated with the problem and said that enforcement was the key issue. He asked whether coaches-only parking could be created.

Borough Councillor Dhindsa noted that a petition had been received by full Council last year relating to the Gade Car Park. By reinstating double yellow lines the problem would be relocated into Park and Vicarage. People would walk further to their cars and make more noise. There was already a shortage of parking spaces in Vicarage.

Borough Councillor Sharpe referred to enforcement in Upton Road, and advised that the Council had a light-touch approach to enforcement at night. Residents who were unable to park would not want to be ticketed overnight. If a nuisance was being caused, however, the Police and the parking shop should be informed. He suggested that the authorities discussed how the issue could be ameliorated.

The Vice Chair, Borough Councillor Wylie, outlined how the Council had come to be responsible for parking enforcement. He explained that cost was another factor in not having 24-hour enforcement. Changing yellow lines was a statutory procedure that could take some time.

Borough Councillor Rackett reported that he had checked the electoral register and there were over 70 residents in Rosslyn Road and approximately 20 people in residential homes.

Borough Councillor Sharpe encouraged all residents to report any antisocial behaviour to the Police as it happened. This meant the problems went on file and built up a picture.

RESOLVED –

that a report be brought to the next meeting and officers liaise with the Police and the Parking Shop.

#### Petitions Received – St James Road

The District Manager reported that a survey had been funded from the discretionary budget which had shown that cars were moving in the preferred direction. Officers would move on to the outline design stage which County Councillor Bell had agreed to help fund.

RESOLVED –

that the position of the St James Road petition be noted.

#### Petitions Received – First and Fourth Avenues

The District Manager said that the petition was to ask that First Avenue be resurfaced before other roads in the area. The Maintenance Team had advised that the road had been displaced as other roads in the county had deteriorated to a greater extent. The work planned for Fourth Avenue was to protect the asset. The treatment of First Avenue was reassessed annually.

The Chair noted that the Forward Works Programme had been agreed to 2016/17 and asked if this meant that the earliest it would be done was 2017/18.

The District Manager replied that this was the case unless it deteriorated to a worse condition than others in the county when it might then move back onto and further up the forward works programme. In the meantime, hazardous potholes would continue to be filled as emergency works.

#### Objections to Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs)

The District Manager confirmed that the TRO for the specialist markets had been sealed and came into effect on 13 February.

RESOLVED –

that the report be noted.

#### Local issues – Update on National Grid Gas Works

The District Manager reported that works had started on the Hempstead Road and Hertfordshire Highways were liaising with Hertfordshire County Council's (HCC) Network Management Unit to regularly update works dates. Work at congestion hot-spots would be undertaken during the school holidays.

The Chair referred to the closure of Eastbury Road. He had not heard any radio announcements about it nor were there any road signs. He had stressed the

need for advance notice in a wide area. He understood that the closure would be for two weeks from 2 April. If the dates had changed he was not aware of it. He asked that this be followed up.

The District Manager said that he would report back to Network Management.

Local issues – update on use of bus lanes by Hackney Carriages

The Chair reported that this had been agreed at Highways Panel. An experimental Traffic Regulation Order would come in during the summer. It was hoped that it would be beneficial to Hackney Carriages and traffic conditions. This would only apply to Hackney Carriages.

Local issues – major resurfacing of A412 St Albans Road

The District Manager explained that the resurfacing was between Longspring and Station Road southbound. The works would take place between 7.30 p.m. and 6.00 a.m. during August. Diversions would be in place and the project lead would be in contact with Members to arrange a briefing. All members of the Joint Member Panel would be invited to attend.

County Councillor Scudder noted that there had been a moratorium on certain road works during the summer due to the Olympics and cited the example of Horseshoe Lane.

County Councillor Brandon expressed the view that the start time was too early and 8.00 p.m. would be more appropriate. The Lead Assistant District Manager responded that the reason for the start time was to ensure the noisy work was done before midnight.

In response to a question from Borough Councillor Khan, the Lead Assistant District Manager noted that there was no longer an association for the shops on St Albans Road but a letter would be sent out and A-boards would inform residents and businesses about the dates affected. Bus operators had also been consulted.

The Vice Chair advised that this would need to be sensitively handled.

RESOLVED –

that the report be noted.

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**SECTION 106 DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS**

The Panel received a report of the Area Highway Development Control Manager including the financial position and proposed uses for transport and highways Section 106 (S106) monies held by Hertfordshire County Council.

The District Manager referred to Appendix A which showed the S106 contributions for the financial year 2011/12. There had been a discussion at the last meeting about how the £250K put aside should be allocated. Officers from Herts Highways had met with Members who had made some suggestions for

how the funds could be used. These included extending the scheme in North Western Avenue to the whole road, improving management of traffic and pedestrian movement in Grandfield Avenue and Bellamy Close, further changes to traffic calming on Nascot Wood Road and a modest contribution to the W30 bus service.

Following a question from Borough Councillor Dhindsa, the Head of Planning explained that a strategic taxi rank review had been undertaken and new ranks had been installed in the Harebreaks, Church Road and Albert Road South. The funds spent covered the cost of the TROs and signage.

County Councillor Bell reported he was pleased with the proposed work on Printers Avenue and the contributions towards the W30 bus route.

Following a question from the Chair, the District Manager explained that the column in Appendix B marked 'S106 fixed costs' covered the cost of officer time in administering the S106 process. He would ask for more detail from the appropriate officers. He advised that the fixed costs of the feasibility stages were greater than for the design and implementation stages.

The Vice Chair underlined the need for a transparent methodology and he suggested that the issue be discussed with the Finance department at HCC.

The Chair asked about the timetabling for the work on Courtlands Drive as Cabinet had agreed the scheme already. He could not understand why the scheme was delayed.

The Vice Chair noted that the report asked whether the Panel wished to continue receiving the traffic light report. There was agreement that Members did still want to see the report.

RESOLVED –

that the report be noted and that the Panel continue to receive the traffic light report.

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## **JMP DISCRETIONARY BUDGET AND LOCAL WORKS PROGRAMME**

The Panel received a report of the Lead Assistant District Manager which provided information about local works programmes that were client managed by the Hertfordshire Highways Watford area team, including Discretionary Budget, approved Section 106 funds for local schemes and the Super CAT2 maintenance budget.

The Lead Assistant District Manager reported that all the discretionary programme works had been completed except Orphanage Road and Radlett Road. In addition, the Super CAT2 works had also been completed. He referred to the Locality Budget spend in Appendix D. There were 24 schemes that had been identified and were awaiting cost codes.

Following a question from County Councillor Scudder, the Lead Assistant District Manager confirmed that the deadline for discounted schemes had now passed. He added that if it was received before June works could be implemented under the 84-day scheme which had a smaller discount.

The Chair noted that HCC was changing contractor and it was not anticipated that any new work would be started under the current contractor.

In response to a question from Borough Councillor Khan, the District Manager explained that the consultation had shown an even split between residents who wanted a one-way scheme on Dell and Elm Roads and those who did not. As the Member for the division, County Councillor Brandon had had the casting vote and had decided not to proceed with the scheme.

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#### **UPDATE ON LOCALISM- FUTURE OF THE HIGHWAYS JOINT MEMBER PANELS**

The Panel received a report of the District Manager which noted that the comments made by the Panel had been fed back. A statement from the Executive Member for Highways and Transport was circulated to the Panel.

The Chair said that it was his understanding that the way the Highways briefings worked in Dacorum, a pilot area for the scheme, was that officers gave a PowerPoint presentation twice a year and no decisions were made.

The District Manager responded that the presentation could be as interactive as Members wished. All district councillors would be invited to attend.

Borough Councillor Sharpe expressed his dissatisfaction with the proposal. All district councillors were welcome to attend the Joint Member Panel (JMP) meetings at present. He felt that the views expressed by the Panel had not been taken on board. He was concerned about the lack of accountability and the lack of debate and decisions. There needed to be engagement with county and borough Members on highways issues. He hoped the plan would be reconsidered.

County Councillor Bell concurred; he felt it was the opposite of localism. The JMP in Watford worked well. He said more details were needed and asked who would chair the briefings.

Borough Councillor Rackett suggested that as the Mayor appointed Members at annual council, it would be useful to know before then. He said that the JMP was not perfect but the replacement was unsatisfactory.

The Chair noted that the Members had been in favour of continuing and the model worked particularly well in an urban area like Watford. He referred to the petition that had been presented to the meeting. As it was in his division, under the proposed arrangements, he alone would respond to it.

Borough Councillor Johnson agreed with the comments; he said that he did not understand how the proposal promoted localism.

Borough Councillor Rackett suggested that the Borough Council appointed six Members at annual council. The county councillors and highways officers would then be invited to the meetings.

The Vice Chair added that he was aware that the JMP could sometimes blur the responsibility for highways issues but highways was an important matter for councillors from both authorities. He felt that consultation needed to be meaningful and the proposals had a democratic deficit. The public expected councillors to hold officers to account. He noted the issue of public transport which affected both councils and highlighted the need for user involvement in these discussions.

Borough Councillor Rackett moved the following motion which was seconded by the Vice Chair:

That the Borough should lead on the establishment of a Highways Panel and that we formally object to moving to a Highways Liaison Briefing instead of a JMP.

On being put to the Panel, this was AGREED.

RESOLVED –

that the Borough should lead on the establishment of a Highways Panel and that Members formally object to moving to a Highways Liaison Briefing instead of a JMP.

#### 45 **INTEGRATED WORKS PROGRAMME**

The District Manager informed the Panel that, as they were meeting before the Works Programmes were available, officers would send the papers to Members by email. He asked that Members return any comments by the end of April.

Following a question from the Chair, the District Manager confirmed that the papers would not be the same as those which went to Cabinet, as they contained additional appendices highlighting changes and Member comments.

RESOLVED –

that the report be noted.

#### 46 **INTEGRATED WORKS PROGRAMME AND PROGRESS REPORTS**

The Panel received a report of the Lead Assistant District Manager which summarised progress on the delivery of the Integrated Works Programme and other programmed works on the highways network in Watford.

The District Manager advised that the information in the papers was identical to that sent to Members by email. He asked if Members still wanted to receive the information with the agenda. The Vice Chair responded that the information should be in the papers as a matter of public record.

The Chair referred to Appendix A2, and asked why all the Highways Locality Budget schemes were not included. The District Manager clarified that Appendix A1 contained the list of schemes to be delivered over the next six weeks. The A2 list should contain all the schemes for the remainder of the financial year but this list was incomplete as the Highway Locality Budget schemes were still awaiting finance codes and budget to be attached to them before they would appear.

Following a question from the Chair about the Vehicle Activated signs on the A41, the District Manager responded that this scheme was being paid for from S106 monies which could carry over into a second year. He noted that there had been a push to install intelligent transport strategy in Watford and this had caused a further delay.

The District Manager referred to Table 2 in Appendix C and noted the schemes to introduce 20 mph zones.

County Councillor Scudder referred to the motion that had been passed at full council in Watford on 21 March 2012 to support the implementation of 20mph zones in residential roads. This would avoid the need for expensive speed-reduction measures in specific roads.

Borough Councillor Rackett added that a letter would be sent to HCC signed by all the party group leaders. In the roads being considered in the report, public consultation had shown support for physical measures. These roads had peculiarities in that they were long one-way streets which encouraged the build-up of speed.

The District Manager referred to Table 3 in Appendix C, He drew the Panel's attention to the projects related to the Croxley Rail Link. There were pedestrian and cycle routes between Ascot Road station and Watford Boys Grammar School and between Watford Hospital Station and Hagden Lane. County Councillor Bell said he supported these measures.

The District Manager explained that the Market Street cycle route had been identified as part of the South West Herts Cycling Strategy. The Chair added that preliminary designs were being developed and the scheme could be implemented the current financial year. He noted that it was only between the High Street and Exchange Road.

Borough Councillor Sharpe said he was pleased that the idea of a contraflow was being pursued. The problem was that it was not possible to cycle down Market Street from West Watford.

The Chair noted that the scheme would be subject to a safety audit. He understood that the implementation of the route was the top cycling priority in the county.

The District Manager referred to Appendix D which outlined progress on the National Station Improvement Programme. He reported that the Traffic Order to provide the pay and display waiting bays on Woodford Road would be appearing in the Watford Observer on 30 March 2012 with a final date for objections of 23 April.

Borough Councillor Rackett said that his concern was egress into Penn Road, there was a need to address pedestrian access. He added that the phasing of the lights would need changing to reflect the different amounts of traffic. He welcomed the improved pedestrian access for ticket holders.

The Vice Chair said that he was concerned about Penn Road, it was vital that there was another vehicle entrance into the carpark as soon as possible. The District Manager clarified the cut through corridor towards Penn Road was for vehicles to exit only, but pedestrians would be able to move both ways.

The Head of Planning introduced Appendix E which contained a list of schemes including the Town Centre Cultural Study. Members were invited to the briefing the following week.

In response to a question from the Chair, the Head of Planning said that the consultation for the footpath through Watford Springs would be through lamp post signage and notices in the newspaper. She added that she would confirm this with the Transport and Project Officer. Local Members would be given a copy of the plans in advance.

The Head of Planning reported that work had been carried out to update the pay and display machines due to a change in the weight of certain coins. The cost of this had to be taken from the parking reserve. She also updated the Panel on the progress of different TROs. This included the extension of the Cassiobury Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) and alterations to yellow lines in Nascot. The consultation regarding the CPZ in Oxhey had shown that there was little appetite for such a scheme amongst residents. Officers were working with Members to develop a considerate parking scheme. She informed the Panel that eight new parking bays were planned for Queens Road. Formal consultation would begin after the purdah period but informal consultation had been ongoing.

Borough Councillor Sharpe noted that regarding a CPZ in Oxhey, the problem was more to do with pressure from residents than from commuters. He highlighted Kingsfield Road as an area which did suffer from commuter parking.

Members expressed their thanks to the Traffic Engineer for the way he had undertaken consultations about new schemes.

The Chair reported that he had met with the District Manager and Borough Councillor Hastrick at Garston Lane where there had recently been a fatal

accident involving a bus. They discussed what measures would be required to improve safety including removing the parking adjacent to the traffic island.

RESOLVED –

that the report be noted.

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#### **OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF HERTFORDSHIRE HIGHWAYS**

The Panel received a report of the District Manager which advised on the performance of Hertfordshire Highways in the Borough of Watford.

The Chair informed the Panel that he had had an exchange of emails about the recent problems with the street lighting. There appeared to be an issue with the sensor on the lighting columns. It was anticipated that the problems would be resolved by the end of the week. The manufacturer was investigating the problem.

Councillor Bell added that it was unacceptable in his view. Further work had been stopped in implementing part-night lighting until the issue was resolved.

The Chair said that although the manufacturer would have to cover the costs there was also the cost of officer time.

RESOLVED –

that the report be noted.

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#### **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

10 July 2012

The Chair said that on behalf of the Panel he wished to thank Councillor Wylie for his input and expertise at the JMP. Councillor Wylie had chaired the Panel and was stepping down as a councillor.

Chair  
Hertfordshire Highways  
Watford Joint Member Panel

The Meeting started at 6.00 pm  
and finished at 8.15 pm