

# HERTFORDSHIRE HIGHWAYS WATFORD JOINT MEMBER PANEL

**24 MARCH 2011**

Present: Borough Councillor I Sharpe (Chair)

County Councillor Cty Cllr Giles-Medhurst ((for minute numbers HH45-10/11 to HH54-10/11)) (Vice-Chair)

County Councillors Cty Cllr Bell, Cty Cllr Brandon, Cty Cllr Oaten, Cty Cllr Scudder and Cty Cllr Watkin

Borough Councillors Grimston, Khan, F Qureshi, S Rackett ((for minute numbers HH45-10/11 to HH52-10/11)) and A Wylie

Officers:	David Swan	Hertfordshire Highways
	Andy Melville	Hertfordshire Highways
	Glen Manley	Hertfordshire Highways
	Sanjay Patel	Hertfordshire Highways
	Christian Hoskins	Hertfordshire County Council
	Andy Gipson	Hertfordshire County Council
	Andy Smith	Watford Borough Council
	Sandra Hancock	Watford Borough Council

45 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There was a change of membership for this meeting: Councillor Grimston replaced Councillor Johnson.

46 **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS (IF ANY)**

There were no disclosures of interests.

47 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2011 were submitted and signed subject to the following amendments:

HH35-10/11

In the last sentence the District Manager had referred to 'salt bins' and not salt.

HH38-10/11

County Councillor Giles-Medhurst made an amendment on this minute number (Section 106) –

“That a report on the use of the funds from West Herts College and the Leggatts Campus be brought forward.”

48        **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

49        **PETITIONS, TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS AND LOCAL ISSUES**

The Panel received a report of the District Manager setting out the current status of petitions and any objections to Traffic Regulations Orders.

Petition – Courtlands Drive/A411 Hempstead Road junction

The Chair said that he was surprised that the analysis of the video survey would take several months. The District Manager responded that this was in line with the terms of the company. The company had been asked to analyse the data and report on any behavioural issues.

The County Councillor for Nascot Park asked whether the petitioner had been informed of the current action taking place. The District Manager stated that he would contact the petitioner.

The District Manager advised that he would ask the company to prepare the results for the July meeting.

**RESOLVED –**

1.        that the District Manager contacts the petitioner to explain the current status of the petition.
2.        survey results to be distributed to and discussed at a separate meeting with lead petitioner, local ward councillors, and officers)

Petition for permanent pedestrian crossing on Horseshoe Lane near northerly junction with Boundary Way

The Vice-Chair noted the report but commented that there were proposals to change the bus stop near this location. He asked officers to ensure that the location of the new bay should be confirmed before any costs were incurred for the crossing.

The District Manager responded that he was aware of the bus stop proposals and it was felt there would be sufficient room for both the bus stop and crossing. He said that he would ask for the findings to be co-ordinated.

The Chair agreed that it was important to identify that there was no suitable position sooner rather than later.

RESOLVED –

that the report be noted.

50 **NETWORK MANAGEMENT GROUP FUNCTIONS**

The Panel received a report of the Network Manager which updated Members on the current list of highway adoptions in the Watford area and the progress on the Lower High Street Experimental Traffic Regulation Order.

RESOLVED –

1. that the report be noted.

51 **SECTION 106 CONTRIBUTIONS**

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

A County Councillor commented that he recognised the report represented a lot of work by officers, however, he always found it to be confusing.

The Vice-Chair referred to Appendix B and noted that this had been produced as a result of an officer steering group. He was not aware Members had had an opportunity to discuss the schemes although this had been requested. He was concerned that if the Joint Member Panels were disbanded Members would have no input. He noted that the funding for the Watford Junction bus interchange had previously been increased and it appeared to have been increased again. The figures for the Clarendon Road pedestrian improvement scheme were inconsistent with previous information. There were two schemes missing from the list.

The Chair said that he echoed the Vice-Chair's concerns. County divisions were often located along major roads. Strategic schemes tended to affect more than one county division. He was concerned that Members would have no input in the future.

The District Manager advised that it had recently become more important to use the Section 106 funding for schemes as other budgets diminished. He would report back Members' concern that officers had agreed funding for some local schemes but not others and Members were not aware. He informed the Panel that it was not clear how much funding was required for strategic schemes. The strategic schemes were seen to benefit the whole of Watford. Some of the applications for funding were only for the preparation of schemes. Many schemes could take two years to get to the construction stage. It was possible that the Clarendon Road scheme might require more funding for future stages. Schemes were often funded by more than one source. With reference to the missing schemes referred to by the Vice-Chair, the District manager advised that

it was not certain the Dalton Way scheme would be progressing further and that further discussions needed to be held regarding the Lower High Street footpath.

Following a question from the Vice-Chair about the amounts received from planning schemes, the officer advised that these were the original amounts received and were not adjusted to include interest. He explained that one amount acquired through Section 106 had expired but interest had been granted.

It was agreed that officers would prepare an information note for all Members, so it was clear what contributions were being reserved for which schemes, including strategic schemes.

A Member referred to the money gained from the Leggatts Campus site. She said that this area had some of the worst roads. She felt that the increase in houses would mean the traffic would get worse. She asked officers to investigate traffic calming on Old North Western Avenue.

The District Manager informed the Panel that officers were aware of the problems regarding Old North Western Avenue. A traffic survey had been carried out and the average speed was just high enough to meet the criteria for an application for traffic calming to be submitted. Following further comments, the District Manager advised that a CS99 could be submitted. On behalf of local councillors had put pressure on officers to move the scheme forward.

A Borough Councillor commented that the public put pressure on Councillors to mitigate the problems, as they did not see any benefits. He was aware the Section 106 funding was required for strategic schemes but this meant local schemes were not progressing as it was not clear what funding was available. The Section 106 monies needed to be spent wisely. The public wanted to work taking place and not spent on schemes about schemes.

A County Councillor asked why the contribution towards the countywide motorcycle magazine was still included on the list.

The District Manager responded that this was a minor sum of money. The Safety Unit considered this the best way to communicate with motorcyclists.

The Vice-Chair said that the monies had to be spent on capital projects.

Members felt that if the Joint Member Panels were disbanded there should still be some form of meeting in Watford. The Chair said that a format could be developed that worked within the Borough Council's structure. He suggested the Constitution Working Party could look at the practicalities.

The Vice-Chair advised that all Watford County Councillors met and discussions could be held at those meetings. In response to the Borough Councillor's comments about Old North Western Avenue he suggested that a similar barrier to the one erected in The Gossamers by Garston Halt could be installed. This would show residents that the council was taking account of their concerns. This was agreed by the Panel.

RESOLVED –

1. that the Panel's comments be agreed.

52

## **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 are 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.

### Discretionary Programme 2010/11

Following a County Councillor's question about the inclusion of Alexandra Road in the 20 mph zone, the District Manager explained the existing speeds were too high for it to become a 20 mph limit without first designing and consulting on traffic calming measures to reduce speeds below 25mph. This was in line with Hertfordshire County Council's Speed Management Strategy. He clarified that the phrase 'un-accrued works costs' referred to schemes which had not been completed during the relevant financial year and could not be carried forward.

A Borough Councillor referred to paragraph 2.6 in the report and the reference to Park Avenue. He stated that following the closure of the doctor's surgery, fewer cars were parked in the road and traffic speeds had increased between Rickmansworth Road and Mildred Avenue. The section between Mildred Avenue and Whippendell Road was not too much of a concern.

A County Councillor commented that one option had been to close the access from Rickmansworth Road.

The District Manager added that there would be more than one solution. A feasibility study would look at all options and then why certain options would be ruled out.

Members felt that a no entry sign would not be a suitable option.

RESOLVED –

1. that Members' comments be noted.

### Discretionary Programme 2011/12

The District Manager advised that a couple more schemes had been added to the list since the last meeting and officers had considered the other schemes in more detail. He informed the Panel that the 20 mph schemes were nearly complete. Fairview Drive would be included in this year's programme and should be completed in the summer.

### Scheme 16 – Greenbank Road

The District Manager informed the Panel that the traffic and parking management measures near Holyrood School in Greenbank Road had been added to the list of schemes. The bulk of the cost was to cover the relocation of the bus lay-by to ensure that parents could safely drop off and pick up the children. The inclusion of this scheme meant that the overall budget exceeded £100,000. He was not aware of the final budget that had been approved for discretionary budgets but he did not believe it would be in excess of £100,000.

The Vice-Chair said that the budget had been set and that there had been no reduction to the discretionary budget for 2011/12.

### Scheme 2 – Buckingham Road

The Borough Councillor for Callowland stated that the item regarding the planters and seats for Buckingham Road could be removed. Residents had requested the removal of the previous seating. The Vice-Chair added that the block paving for Buckingham Road needed to be protected from vehicles driving over it.

### Waterfields Recreational Ground

The Vice-Chair asked whether the CS99 for Waterfields Recreational Ground had been rejected.

The District Manager advised that it had not yet been submitted. He said that officers were waiting to hear about Croyley Rail Link as this would require a large amount of funding. He added that it was unlikely that all local schemes would be funded from the Section 106 monies.

The Vice-Chair said that the recreation ground was lacking lighting.

The Chair asked on what basis officers had submitted some schemes for Section 106 funding and others had not been submitted. Members had not ranked the schemes in order of preference.

The District Manager replied that there had been no rationale behind the ones submitted, other than it was known contributions needed to be reserved for Croyley Rail Link as a strategic scheme, but at the time of the meeting it was not clear how much would be needed and from what developments. Officers had pushed for traffic calming schemes to be approved. The steering group ran out of time and was unable to consider all applications without Croyley Rail Link funding being determined.

The Vice-Chair stated that he was not happy. Members had agreed at the last Joint Member Panel that a CS99 would be submitted for the recreation ground. The reason the steering group had ran out of time was not acceptable. If the

application had been rejected by the County Portfolio Holder, Members would know where they stood.

The Chair agreed with the Vice-Chair's comments as did Panel Members. He said that the lighting enhancement in the recreation ground was needed for an important pedestrian route.

The District Manager explained that the Section 106 report listed different schemes for the available funding. Those listed as Scheme 1 were strategic schemes and were the most important. Once the funding for Croxley Rail Link was determined, this would allow decisions to be made on funding of lower priority schemes such as the recreational ground lighting.

A Borough Councillor commented that the Council had a pedestrian strategy. This was a key walking route and would be used by people walking to and from the station and would therefore be part of the Croxley Rail Link scheme. He added that it was important that Members' displeasure was communicated to officers. The current procedure was not satisfactory. It appeared to be haphazard and un-coordinated. Different policy strands were not being followed through. He suggested that the Portfolio Holder for Planning should make the complaint.

The Chair suggested that the complaint should be made by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Joint Member Panel.

#### Scheme 6 – Fairview Drive

The County Councillor for Nascot Park asked for clarification regarding the fees for the Fairview Drive scheme. The fees seemed to be high in comparison to the works costs.

The District Manager explained that the cost for 2011/12 depended on the amount of work carried out in 2010/11. Design fee costs had generally gone down.

#### Scheme 14 – Tudor Avenue junction with A41

The Chair advised that a briefing note had been circulated to Members about the Woodmere Avenue Width Restrictions.

The District Manager informed the Panel that a survey had been carried out asking residents about the refurbishment of the width restriction in Woodmere Avenue. It was proposed to carry out the same works in Tudor Avenue.

A Borough Councillor commented that cars had increased in width over the last ten years. The post had been lowered and should be below cars' wing mirrors. The gap was tight for some vehicles. He suggested that publicity was needed.

The Vice-Chair said that the restriction was compliant with the regulations. He felt that if wing mirrors were being damaged then vehicles were travelling too

fast. He was not aware of any complaints regarding the 6' 6" width restriction in Oxhey. Vehicles also misused the central lane at the Woodmere Avenue restriction. He suggested that officers ensured the Woodmere Avenue was correct before changing the width restriction in Tudor Avenue.

A County Councillor said that in his opinion the restriction had been reduced from 7' 6" to 7'. The posts were very unforgiving. He suggested that the kerbs should be higher and the posts set slightly further back from the kerb.

The County Councillor for Meriden Tudor suggested that the Tudor Avenue scheme should be dropped. The reason it had been proposed was to stop the damage caused by larger lorries.

The Chair said that from the discussions he had concluded that Woodmere Avenue should remain as it was currently designed and to see if the complaints reduced. He would take account of the local councillor's views about the Tudor Avenue scheme.

The County Councillor advised that she had not been contacted by residents from Tudor about this restriction.

The Lead Assistant District Manager stated that the Tudor Avenue restriction was regularly damaged by lorries.

A Borough Councillor suggested that officers should consider whether the restrictions should be increased to 7' 6" due to the increase in the width of vehicles.

It was also suggested that there should only be two posts at the restriction and not three.

The District Manager informed the Panel that he had discussed the possibility of CCTV at this location with the safety camera team. The cost could be in the region of £30,000 to £40,000, as there would be a need for detection loops in the road. There would also be an annual cost. Any money accrued through fines was sent to the Government.

The Chair felt that the cost of the CCTV was not feasible and should therefore not be implemented. From the discussions he had observed that Members wanted Woodmere Avenue to remain as it was at the present time. There were conflicting views about Tudor Avenue.

The Vice-Chair suggested that this scheme could be reviewed at the July meeting.

RESOLVED –

1. that the scheme be reviewed at the July meeting.



53 **INTEGRATED WORKS PROGRAMME AND FORWARD WORKS PROGRAMME**

The Panel received a report of the Forward Works Programme Manager. It was noted that the reports would need to be circulated to the Panel in April once they had been prepared by officers.

54 **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.

Active Works Bulletin

A County Councillor noted that the list did not include the Saracens' games to be played at Vicarage Road Stadium. It also did not include any road closures for street parties.

The District Manager explained that the list covered the next six weeks.

Casualty Reduction Schemes

The District Manager informed the Panel that the majority of schemes were nearing completion. It was possible that the Queens Avenue might not go ahead.

The County Councillor for Callowland Leggatts referred to the St Albans Road and Bushey Mill Lane scheme. He asked whether any other works were due to take place other than lighting. The District Manager advised that he would check this information for the Councillor.

Watford Borough Council Highway Works

The Transport and Infrastructure Section Head informed the Panel that the Cassiobury Controlled Parking Zone evaluation was under way. The Parking Services Manager had retired.

Members wished the Parking Services Manager a happy retirement and thanked her for her hard work.

It was noted that the report should have referred to Lavinia Avenue and not Lavinia Close.

The Vice-Chair referred to the parking problems experienced at Woodside Leisure Centre. The Transport and Infrastructure Section Head advised that he had spoken to one of the Ward Councillors and further information would be provided to the Panel at the next meeting.

## Watford Programme 2010-11

A County Councillor noted that the South West Herts Cycling Study made no reference to consultation with the Joint Member Panel.

The District Manager advised that all Members would be consulted.

### Update on Watford Junction National Station Improvement Scheme

The consultant to the Passenger Transport Unit updated the Panel on the latest situation regarding the station improvements. Further information would be provided at the next meeting. He clarified the location of the Blue Badge drop off area. Immediately in front of the station there would be a pedestrian area. There would also be a blue badge drop off point in the long stay car park, which was near platforms 9 and 10.

The Chair thanked officers for arranging the special Members' meeting to discuss the station improvements.

### Intelligent Transport Scheme update

The ITS Manager gave a presentation about Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS). This included variable message signs, car park guidance systems, CCTV and automatic number plate recognition. A Traffic Control Centre had been set up as a pilot. Real-time passenger information could be used to inform passengers. It required cross-boundary co-ordination. Web and mobile phone applications were being developed to inform passengers.

Following a question from the Vice-Chair about the consultation on the location of signs, the ITS Manager informed the Panel that there had been discussions with the Network Managers. He acknowledged that errors had been made with the location of the sign in Pinner Road. Consultation had taken place with local residents but it was questionable whether it had been robust enough.

The Chair suggested that officers could contact the planning team or conservation officers who could advise on less intrusive sites.

A County Councillor asked whether it was possible to fine drivers who incorrectly used bus lanes.

The ITS Manager said that there were enforcement problems. Hertfordshire was behind many counties who had put revenue back in to schemes. It was possible to quickly reclaim the cost. Following a question about identifying drivers who jumped red lights, the ITS Manager responded that the only solution was a red light camera.

The Vice-Chair asked whether it would be possible for taxis to use the bus lanes. The officer responded that the Moor End scheme would soon be operational and officers would be able to report back.

The ITS Manager stated that he would ensure the Watford District Manager was kept informed.

RESOLVED –

1. that the Panel's comments be noted.

55 **SOUTH WEST HERTS PLAN ANNUAL REVIEW**

The Panel received a report of the Programmes and Strategy Manager informing Members of the annual review of the South West Herts Plan which had recently taken place.

A Borough Councillor said that he was confused as this document was the annual report. The next review was not due to take place until 2013.

RESOLVED –

1. that the contents of the South West Herts Plan Annual Review be noted.

56 **OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF HERTFORDSHIRE HIGHWAYS**

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

RESOLVED –

1. that the report be noted.

57 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

- Tuesday 12 July 2011

Chair  
Hertfordshire  
Highways Watford  
Joint Member Panel

The Meeting started at 6.00 pm  
and finished at 8.55 pm