

Minutes of JTB Member/Officer working group on Air Quality

Monday 26th October, 2009 at 4pm

Conference Room, Council Offices, Argyle Road

Present: Cllr. Coates (SDC): Cllr. Dibsdall (SDC): Cllr. London (KCC): Cllr Chard (KCC): Richard Wilson (SDC); Alan Ash (KCC) Alex Dawson (SDC); Gary Connor (SDC) Steve Craddock (SDC): Andy Bracey (SDC)

Apologies: :Cllr. Brookbank (SDC): Cllr Parry (KCC): Malcolm Appleby (KCC)

1. Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman

As Cllr. Loney has now stood down from this working group, it was agreed that Cllr. Coates should be elected Chairman. Members did not want a vice-chairman.

2. Reminder of the terms of reference

A letter dated 24/07/07 outlining the terms of reference of the group was read out and it was confirmed that the following remains the remit of the group.

'To identify suitable traffic congestion reduction proposals in designated Air Quality Management Areas to submit schemes for funding approval in future local transport plans with a view to reducing the impact of pollution from nitrogen dioxide in these areas, caused by traffic congestion'

Cllr. Parry (KCC) and Cllr Brookbank (SDC) have now joined the group whilst Cllr. Fittock (KCC) has left it.

3. Bat and Ball AQMA

3.1 The Highway Improvement Scheme Progress report (including options for Bat and Ball Junction) which was reported to the Joint Transport Board (22nd September 2009) was discussed.

Alan Ash confirmed that KHS are looking at parking and lining issues which were raised in the report.

Disappointment was expressed that works to improve air quality at the Bat & Ball junction were being further delayed and that an officer at KHS had seemed to amend the proposed works previously agreed. Members expressed concern over this apparent lack of communication about this issue at KHS. Members also confirmed that they required this scheme to be completed this financial year. It was also confirmed that the £15,000 grant obtained by SDC from DEFRA, needed to be spent this financial year as it had already been carried forward from 2008/09.

Action: KHS to advise when scheme has been amended. (Alan Ash).

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3.2 There was some discussion as to whether the Greatness Quarry works could be regarded as an extension of the existing planning application or as a new application, in which case S106 funding could be increased.

Action: KHS to confirm position (Alan Ash)

4. Section 106 contributions from developments in the Bat and Ball area.

Section 106 funding has been requested from both the Sainsbury's development and Tarmac (via KCC) towards the Air Quality Action Plan actions.

5. Sevenoaks Town centre AQMA

RW outlined the scoping report prepared by Jacobs for KHS which reviewed a set of 6 traffic management options to reduce congestion and improve air quality as well providing opportunities to enhance the street scene of the town centre.

The advantages and disadvantages of each option were discussed with the following 3 options appearing to be the most beneficial and worthy of further investigation.

Option 2

High Street – 1 way southbound from Pembroke Road to London Road

London Road – 1 way northbound from High Street to South Park

London Road – 2 way traffic north of South Park

Pembroke Road – 2 way traffic

This option was implemented temporarily during road works. It provides access to the car park adjacent to the Stag Theatre from the north of the town centre, while removing all through southbound traffic from London Road.

Option 3

High Street – 1 way southbound from Pembroke Road to London Road

London Road – 1 way northbound from High Street to Pembroke Road

Pembroke Road – 2 way traffi

This option has many benefits including the opportunity to redistribute road space for the entirety of London Road and High Street.

Option 4

High Street – 1 way southbound from Pembroke Road to London Road

London Road – 2 way traffic from High Street to South Park

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London Road – 1 way northbound from South Park to Pembroke Road

Pembroke Road – 2 way traffic

This option provides the opportunity to reallocate road space for the majority of London Road, while still providing good accessibility to the Stag Theatre car park from the south of the town centre. It also maintains access to town centre car parks, while minimising inconvenience to “through” traffic should assist in wider town centre vitality objectives.

The following points were noted:

- Section 3.32 - Queue Length Surveys – did not appear to take account of the London Road/High Street Junction in modelling.
- Would like greater emphasis on street scene particularly for pedestrians
- Pedestrian surveys should take account of the uncontrolled pedestrian crossings along London Road
- Impact of the bus station needs to be clarified

Action: That KHS will instruct Jacobs to take forward options 2, 3 and 4 for further study, taking account of the above noted points (KHS). The further investigations will include car parking surveys: queue length surveys; pedestrian count surveys and traffic counts.

Businesses and residents in the area will also be surveyed to obtain their views on currently perceived problems and ideas for possible solutions.

Once these 3 options have been further researched, more detailed schemes will be proposed for wider consultation and decision. It was noted that the scoping report was, at present a confidential document.

SDC confirmed that a grant of £10,000 from DEFRA had been secured, for this survey work, and this funding needed to be spent this financial year as it had already been carried forward from 2008/09.

6. Work plans for other AQMA's.

Action: Officers to review a number of low cost and deliverable measures to assist with traffic flow at Swanley and Seal (Richard Wilson). Road widening and a traffic light system operating during peak school traffic hours were considered worthy of further investigation.

7. Any other business

None

8. Date of next meeting

TBC

