



Norfolk County Council

Joint Committee for Transforming Cities Funds Minutes of the Meeting Held on 17 December 2020 at 2pm on Microsoft Teams (virtual Meeting)

Present:

Cllr Martin Wilby (Chairman)	Norfolk County Council
Cllr Barry Stone (Vice-Chairman)	Norfolk County Council
Cllr Mike Stonard	Norwich City Council
Cllr Ian Stutely	Norwich City Council
Cllr Brian Watkins	Norfolk County Council

Substitute Members Present

Cllr Jo Copplestone for Cllr Lana Hemsall	Broadland District Council
Cllr Danny Douglas for Cllr Steve Morpew	Norfolk County Council

Also Present

Alex Cliff	Highway Network and Digital Innovation Manager, Norfolk County Council
Amy Cole	Project Engineer (Infrastructure Delivery), Norfolk County Council
Durga Goutam	Senior Engineer - Major Project Team, Norfolk County Council
Tim Osborn	Project Engineer, Norfolk County Council
Stuart Payne	Associate (WSP), Norfolk County Council
Andrew Wadsworth	Senior Engineer (WSP), Norfolk County Council
Jeremy Wiggin	Transport for Norwich Manager, Norfolk County Council

1. Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Lana Hemsall (Cllr Jo Copplestone substituting), Peter Joyner, Cllr Kay Mason-Billig, Cllr Steve Morpew (Cllr Danny Douglas substituting).

2. Minutes of last meeting

- 2.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2020 were **agreed** as an accurate record.

3. Declarations of Interest

- 3.1 No interests were declared.

4. Items received as urgent business

- 4.1 No urgent business was discussed

5. Transforming Cities – South Park Avenue and Unthank Road

5.1 The Joint Committee received the report setting out highway improvement proposals developed for the South Park Avenue and Unthank Road areas in Norwich, planned for delivery during 2021. These proposals had been through preliminary and detailed design stages for which a variety of options had been assessed, reaching the final proposal presented in the report and appendices.

5.2 The following points were discussed and noted:

- Officers were asked how much bus times would be improved by the proposed improvements. The Transport for Norwich Manager replied that buses had to slow to a crawl when passing each other on South Park Avenue due to the width of the road; with the proposed changes, a minute to a minute and a half could be saved on each bus journey. Given the high number of journeys on this route each day, this would be a worthwhile saving.
- Officers confirmed that the widening to 6 metres on South Park avenue would allow vehicles to pass safely; any larger increase would impact on tree roots.
- Cllr Ian Stutely arrived at 14.12
- Concerns were raised about vehicle visibility at the crossing on South Park Avenue; The Transport for Norwich Manager replied that the bus shelter would be moved to improve visibility and compliance with the speed limit was good on this route.
- It was **suggested** that the double yellow lines on South Park Avenue at the junction with Parmenter Road be extended; Officers would look at all suggestions which came in as part of the consultation.
- The Project Engineer (Infrastructure Delivery) **agreed** to look into double yellow line provision outside Colman Hospital which was reported to affect buses passing.
- It was **requested** that Officers discuss with First Bus about reinstating the night bus service on the 25 route after the Covid-19 pandemic and issues that had been reported of people being stranded at night on this route due to overcrowding.
- The Chair thanked bus operators for their work over the past months

5.3

The Joint Committee **AGREED** to proceed to public consultation on the proposals for South Park Avenue and Unthank Road as shown in Appendices A and B of the report.

6. Transforming Cities – King Street

6.1 The Joint Committee received the report setting out proposals for improvements to King Street which had been through preliminary design stages and a public consultation prior to reaching the preferred proposal which was presented in the report and attachments.

6.2 The following points were discussed and noted:

- Officers confirmed that the residential developments at St Anne's Quarter were factored into considerations for the scheme; the developers for St Anne's Quarter were responsible for some works in King Street which would be complementary to the TCF scheme.
- The proposed improvements would make the carriageway wide enough for 2 vehicles to pass. Pedestrians were the highest users of this road, cyclists the second highest and cars and other vehicles the third highest. The scheme was intended to improve facilities for walkers and cyclists.

- 6.3 The Joint Committee **AGREED** to approve the proposals as shown in Appendices A and B of the report, which will be subject to a follow-up public consultation

7. Transforming Cities – St. Stephens Road

- 7.1 The Joint Committee received the report outlining proposals developed for St Stephens Road and Grove Road in Norwich. These proposals had been through preliminary design stages for which design options had been assessed and outlined in the report setting out a preferred option for Members to consider taking forward to formal consultation.

- 7.2 The following points were discussed and noted:

- Concerns were raised about the knock-on effect for other roads of stopping the left hand turn onto Grove Road from St Stephens Road. Officers were interested to hear the views of residents as part of the consultation.
- The Highway Network and Digital Innovation Manager **confirmed** that modelling for removal of the bus lane was in process and would be shared with the Joint Committee once complete.
- It was suggested that a 20mph speed limit on this route could improve safety further and the Transport for Norwich Manager **agreed** to look further into this.
- The Transport for Norwich Manager **agreed** to look into signalling arrangements for cycles to be able to turn right out of Grove Road out of St Stephens.
- A discussion was held about the St Stephens roundabout and whether a T-Junction would be more appropriate here. The original bid to Government included St Stephens roundabout but this had to be removed in the re-submission.
- Concerns were raised about the low frequency of buses to and from city college and suggested that more bus journeys could be encouraged to and from this site.
- Concerns were raised about traffic queuing into Town Close School and Officers were **asked** to write to the school about their drop off and pick up process.
- Officers confirmed that underspends in all schemes would be considered for re-allocation as appropriate.

- 7.3 The Joint Committee **AGREED**:

1. To note the options that have been identified.
2. To approve Option B to take forward for public consultation.

8. Transforming Cities – St. Stephens Street

- 8.1 The Joint Committee received the report outlining proposals developed for the St Stephens Street area which were subject to initial consultation. The outcome of this consultation was outlined in the report, as well as further work that would be undertaken.

- 8.2 The following points were discussed and noted:

- The Chair welcomed the comments received from the Norwich Cycling Campaign.
- Comments were made about the sawtooth bus bays and whether these were suitable. It was noted that the Norwich Cycling Campaign had been concerned about the proposals causing danger to cyclists using St Stephens Street and the alternative route suggested in the proposals being very long, and therefore further discussions with them and other cycling groups were welcomed.
- A Member welcomed work to expand public transport provision but was concerned

the bus station could not cope with the extra demand and therefore welcomed the suggestion to work with bus operators. Officers were talking to operators about how to balance the range of services at the bus station and on St Stephens Street

- Officers had engaged with Sustrans across the TCF programme to work on designs of schemes; they would review the sawtooth arrangement and other aspects of the St Stephens Street scheme. Officers were also engaging with other groups representing cyclists.
- A Member was concerned about more buses using St Stephens Street increasing pollution and suggested use of the Bus Services Act.
- The option of buses using the road in only one direction could open up a dedicated cycle route and wider footways for pedestrians but would mean halving the bus stop capacity and services would need to be rerouted.
- The scheme had to be delivered by the end of 23 March 2021.

- 8.3 The Joint Committee **AGREED** to note the outcome of the initial consultation and further work that needs to be done to develop these proposals

9. Transforming Cities – Cromer Road and Aylsham Road

- 9.1 The Joint Committee received the report setting out improvements for Cromer Road and Aylsham Road, which was identified in the TCF application as a key public transport corridor from North Norfolk, Hellesdon and the Airport Park & Ride site.

- 9.2 The following points were discussed and noted

- Cllr Copplestone had been contacted by the local member with their concerns on the project:
 - the data used to evidence the scheme was from 2018 and therefore not up to date, and the data on bus frequency was taken from bus timetables.
 - the bus and cycle lanes were proposed to be 24/7 however the “crunch” times were in the morning and evening rush hours. The last bus from Cromer was at 8.30pm and park and ride services stopped at 6pm with no buses provided on a Sunday
 - since the NDR had been built, the route had been a main vehicular route from Norwich with much traffic coming in on the Cromer Road route.
 - the Boundary Road junction was one of the most highly polluted in the region and implementing a bus lane could increase tailbacks and pollution here.
- Officers responded to some of the Local Member’s concerns:
 - the Highway Network and Digital Innovation Manager clarified that due to the Covid-19 pandemic, traffic volumes in 2020 had been lower, and not representative of usual traffic volumes. Therefore the 2018 data was considered representative.
 - Cromer Road was a wide road and putting in a bus lane would not reduce its capacity to provide two-way traffic for cars.
- Cllr Copplestone asked why a cycle lane to connect this route with the NDR had not been considered and **suggested** this was added to the consultation. The Transport for Norwich Manager replied that work to look at a cycle lane here had been carried out and this would require third party land; this scheme remained in the wider transformation programme and would likely be delivered through a different funding source. He **agreed** to share the details with Cllr Copplestone and the Local Member.
- There were no proposals for the Boundary Road junction but changes to legislation

were being considered to help with moving traffic offences; as this junction had a yellow box, if these legislation changes came through then cost effective ways to enforce this could improve junction compliance here.

9.3 The Joint Committee **AGREED:**

- To proceed to public consultation on the proposals for Cromer Road and Aylsham Road as shown on the plans contained in Appendix A
- That officers look at the wider issues raised by Cllr Jo Copplestone and the Local Member at paragraph 9.2, bullet points 1 and 3

The Meeting Closed at 15:05

**Cllr Martin Wilby, Chair,
Joint Committee for Transforming Cities Funds**



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