



## Norfolk County Council

### **Joint Committee for Transforming Cities Funds Minutes of the Meeting Held on 10 June 2021 at 2pm on Microsoft Teams (virtual meeting)**

**Present:**

Cllr Martin Wilby (Chairman)  
Cllr Barry Stone (Vice-Chairman)  
Cllr Emma Corlett  
Cllr Sue Lawn  
Cllr Kay Mason-Billig  
Cllr Mike Stonard  
Cllr Ian Stutely  
Cllr Brian Watkins

**Representing:**

Norfolk County Council  
Norfolk County Council  
Norfolk County Council  
Broadland District Council  
South Norfolk District Council  
Norwich City Council  
Norwich City Council  
Norfolk County Council

**Officers Present:**

Hollie Adams  
Amy Cole  
  
Alex Cliff  
  
Durga Goutam  
Ed Parnaby  
Stuart Payne  
Jeremy Wiggin

**Title:**

Committee Officer, Norfolk County Council  
Project Engineer (Infrastructure Delivery), Norfolk County Council  
Highway Network and Digital Innovation Manager, Norfolk County Council  
Senior Engineer - Major Project Team, Norfolk County Council  
Transport Planner, Norfolk County Council  
Associate (WSP), Norfolk County Council  
Transport for Norwich Manager, Norfolk County Council

**Others Present**

Jeremy Cooper  
Cllr Shelagh Gurney  
Cllr Jamie Osborn  
Cllr Ben Price

**Title:**

Managing Director of Go-East Anglia  
Local Member for Hellesdon  
Local Member for Norwich Mancroft  
Local Member for Norwich Thorpe Hamlet

**1. Apologies for Absence**

1.1 No apologies were received. Peter Joyner was absent.

**2. Election of Vice-Chair**

2.1 The Chair, seconded by Cllr Mason-Billig, nominated Cllr Barry Stone.

2.2 Cllr Barry Stone was duly elected as Vice-Chair for the ensuing Council year.

**3. Minutes of last meeting**

3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2021 were agreed as an accurate record.

#### **4. Declarations of Interest**

- 4.1 No interests were declared.

#### **5. Items received as urgent business**

- 5.1 No urgent business was discussed.

#### **6. Connecting the Norwich Lanes**

- 6.1.1 The Joint Committee received the report setting out proposals to deliver a number of highway improvement schemes as part of a holistic programme termed “Connecting the Norwich Lanes”. This programme would bring the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) funded schemes together with those funded from a variety of other sources to enable a co-ordinated approach to consultation, assessment, design and delivery.
- 6.1.2 The Transport for Norwich Manager introduced the report to the Joint Committee:
- Funding for this scheme had been received from several sources.
  - The scheme included a proposal to make the temporary exclusion of general traffic on Exchange Street and St Benedict’s Street permanent.
  - Initial traffic modelling had been carried out; more detailed modelling was due to be carried out to look at wider impacts of the scheme.
  - Consultation and engagement would be carried out in summer 2021 with final proposals due to be brought back to the Joint Committee after this.
- 6.2 The following points were discussed and noted:
- Officers were asked what engagement was held with local businesses regarding their concerns about the scheme. The Transport for Norwich Manager replied that traders had been engaged with during development of the proposals and the consultation plan had been designed to ensure the consultation was as engaging and inclusive as possible.
  - A Member of the Joint Committee discussed her concerns that the permanent closure of Exchange Street may cause an increase in traffic on Bethel Street and Cleveland Road; she requested that baseline air quality levels were taken so the impact of the scheme could be monitored. The Transport for Norwich Manager confirmed that officers worked closely with Norwich City Council, who monitored air quality across Norwich, and a baseline of air quality had been gathered to inform monitoring moving forward.
  - A Member of the Joint Committee noted that the potential increase in traffic on Bethel Street and Cleveland road was likely to be mitigated by the Grapes Hill scheme, see Agenda item 7.
  - Officers clarified that plans for parking bays on St Giles Street were in development and would be finalised after the consultation. It was confirmed that access to the lanes would be maintained for deliveries and blue badge holders.
  - A Member of the Joint Committee felt the scheme would be positive for businesses, citing evidence from similar, already implemented schemes.
- 6.3 Cllr Jamie Osborn spoke to the Joint Committee as local Member for Norwich Mancroft:
- Cllr Osborn hoped additional measures were included to ensure that motorists

adhered to the closure of exchange street.

- Cllr Osborn suggested that a holistic strategy should be considered to mitigate the effects of traffic arriving at and leaving large carparks in the surrounding area.
- Cllr Osborn was concerned about a reported lack of engagement with residents and businesses so far and hoped there would be opportunity for people to come together to share ideas for the future of Norwich and these areas. He suggested an exhibition style or living streets style model would be beneficial.
- Cllr Osborn pointed out that the lanes housed residents as well as businesses and asked that their views were considered as part of the consultation.

6.4 The Joint Committee **RESOLVED**:

1. To **APPROVE** a public consultation on the Connecting the Norwich Lanes proposals as shown in Appendices A, B, C and D which includes making the temporary exclusion of general traffic on Exchange Street and St Benedict's Street permanent.

## 7. Grapes Hill Roundabout

7.1.1 The Joint Committee received the report setting out proposals for Grapes Hill Roundabout and recommending that the scheme was approved for construction and that the statutory procedures to implement the required Traffic Regulation Orders were commenced.

7.1.2 The Transport for Norwich Manager introduced the report to the Joint Committee:

- The proposals were first brought to Joint Committee in February 2021 and a public consultation was carried out in March 2021. Two hundred responses were received to the consultation with most being in support of the scheme and varying levels of support for different elements within it.
- The scheme had been altered in line with feedback received during consultation, shown in paragraph 3 of the report.
- Officers were working on the detailed design of traffic management elements and the final cost may therefore exceed the amount outlined in the report; if this was the case, funding would be reallocated from the wider Transforming Cities Fund programme, however officers were confident that this would still demonstrate high value for money.

7.2 The following points were discussed and noted:

- Concerns were raised by some Members of the Joint Committee about the safety of the proposed shared use facility for pedestrians and cyclists and that the mixture of off and on-road cycling facilities may make motorists less tolerant of cyclists using the carriageway. Officers reported that data showed the number of cyclists using the road on the approach to the roundabout was small as most used off-carriageway facilities here. It was proposed to extend the existing off-road facilities and make the existing shared use facility wider, longer and more effective and allow cyclists to join it in a safe area with good visibility.
- A Member of the Joint Committee raised concerns that the Equality Impact Assessment did not look at the impact of the shared use facility on sensory impaired people in the area, particularly those using the Vauxhall Centre, Hamlet Centre and Access Forum. Officers confirmed that the Equality Impact Assessment would be reviewed while the scheme was finalised and therefore this aspect of it could be developed in more detail.

- Some Members suggested that instead of being removed, the traffic lights at Convent Road be switched off for 3 months to pilot the impact of this change.
- It was suggested that the timings of crossings at Chapelfield North be changed to be more sensitive to pedestrians and cyclists. The Highway Network and Digital Innovation Manager replied that removal of signals on Convent Road would give greater flexibility of control for the remaining signals on the roundabout. In-carriageway sensors would be used to detect queues on Chapelfield North and Cleveland Road to detect the flow of traffic.
- The proposed changes at Grapes Hill Roundabout would help mitigate the concerns about an increase in traffic on Bethel Street and carpark traffic travelling up Cleveland road as discussed in paragraph 6.2 for the report “Connecting the Norwich Lanes”.
- The Chair felt that this scheme was a key piece of infrastructure for the city and would help improve traffic flow in the area.
- The Transport for Norwich Manager confirmed that safety audits would be conducted during construction, once the scheme was built and once the changes were embedded; any unforeseen issues which arose would be rectified.
- Officers reported that heat maps developed from data taken from apps such as Strava and Beryl Bike showed people took several routes into the city from this part of Norwich. Clear signage would be in place for cyclists to navigate around the junction.
- It was noted that a balance across all road users needed to be provided as not all were able to walk or cycle.
- A Member suggested that mitigations and traffic calming in side streets impacted by the scheme, such as Essex Street, were put in place.
- Joint Committee Members suggested that the report was brought back to a future meeting after implementation to look at issues raised, and mitigations required.

7.3.1 Cllr Jamie Osborn spoke to the Joint Committee as local Member for Norwich Mancroft:

- Cllr Osborn was concerned about the safety for pedestrians and cyclists using the shared use facility. He felt that cyclists would be discouraged from using the roundabout due to the amount of traffic using it each day, with most space being given to vehicles.
- Cllr Osborn felt that the aims of the Transforming Cities Fund would not be met through this scheme as he felt it would encourage more cars to use the ring-road, citing the forecast 6% increase in traffic in the first year which he believed would grow year on year and negatively impact on buses.

7.3.2 Officers responded to Cllr Osborne’s comments by clarifying that the 6% increase in traffic was traffic which would be reassigned from city centre roads and kept on the ring road. Delays at this junction were significant, with large variations in bus journey times throughout the day; the scheme aimed to improve bus journey time and reduce bus delays.

7.4 With 5 votes for and 3 abstentions the Joint Committee **RESOLVED**:

1. To **APPROVE** the proposals for Grapes Hill Roundabout as shown in Appendix B of the report.
2. To **CARRY OUT** the statutory procedures associated with the legal notices for the proposed toucan crossing and amendments required to existing pedestrian and cycle route.

## **8. Cromer Road & Aylsham Road**

- 8.1.1 The Joint Committee received the report setting out proposals for Cromer Road and Aylsham Road for bus priority measures to encourage greater use of public transport, including Park and Ride, for local and longer distance journeys, the latter of which would help to address concerns outlined in the Hellesdon Neighbourhood Plan regarding through-traffic from further afield. The proposals had been subject to a public consultation from January 2021 to March 2021.
- 8.1.2 The Transport for Norwich Manager introduced the report to the Joint Committee:
- Concerns were raised during consultation by residents about the proposals; the report addressed these concerns by pointing out that access to properties would be maintained, no paths would be narrowed and access to shops and services would remain.
  - During the consultation period the Government released its new bus strategy, Bus Back Better; the proposals for this scheme were in line with this strategy.
  - Delivery would be subject to appropriate funding being received for the cycle way.
  - The scheme represented good value for money.
- 8.2.1 Cllr Shelagh Gurney spoke to the Joint Committee as local Member for Hellesdon:
- Residents local to the proposals were concerned about the decision being included with the TCF programme and by installation of a new pelican crossing in preparation for the bus lane.
  - Cllr Gurney was disappointed that the points she raised in response to the consultation were not included in the report.
  - Cllr Gurney felt that the statistics and data used to inform the scheme were too old, with some of them being up to 5 years old.
  - There was a poor bus service on Cromer Road and Cllr Gurney felt a bus lane on Reepham Road would have been a preferred option for a bus lane.
  - The report estimated 48,000 passengers per week travelling by bus on Cromer Road, but Cllr Gurney questioned this figure as anecdotal evidence suggested most buses travelling outside of peak times on this road had low occupancy.
  - Residents were concerned about congestion and rat running, noting that another bus lane was due to be installed on Drayton High Road as part of the Persimmon housing development.
  - Cllr Gurney suggested that residents would prefer a 7.30 to 9.30am bus lane was piloted, in a similar approach to on Wroxham Road.
  - The scheme was not supported by Cllr Gurney, the parish council or residents
- 8.2.2 Officers replied to Cllr Gurney's comments:
- Feedback in the report was summarised, and similar comments were not replicated due to the high number of comments received.
  - The data used to inform the scheme was from 2018 and was the most up to date data available.
  - Bus levels in the last 18 months had been lower than normal due to the Covid-19 pandemic, therefore pre-Covid data was the reference point used for bus usage data. Before the pandemic, bus travel in Norwich was increasing year-on-year, so it was expected this trend would continue after the pandemic.
- 8.3 Jeremy Cooper spoke to the Joint Committee as representative of Go-East Anglia

- Mr Cooper discussed the Government's expectations that Councils installed bus lanes wherever possible.
- Mr Cooper felt the proposals were democratic and would offer improvements for those using public transport.
- Mr Cooper felt that ensuring access to the city centre was important for the community and to support the local economy.
- Quicker and more punctual journey times from Hellesdon park and ride would encourage more people to use the service and free up road space for vehicles using the city centre, improving journey times and reducing emissions.
- In order to ensure that park and ride users had confidence in journey times and punctuality of buses Mr Cooper felt it was important for the bus lane to be reserved for park and ride buses during operating times.
- Mr Cooper discussed the aspirations for carbon neutral buses to be provided in future.

8.4 The following points were discussed and noted:

- Joint Committee Members noted the importance of public transport schemes for reducing traffic in the centre of Norwich.
- Some Joint Committee Members suggested that the bus lane should be trialled at peak times initially to measure outcomes and impact.
- The Chair pointed out that bus lanes had other beneficial uses such as for emergency vehicles and cyclists.
- Officers clarified that most bus lanes in Norfolk operated on a 24/7, 7 day a week basis. It was a Government expectation that Local Authorities installed bus lanes on a full-time basis.
- The importance of investing in electric and zero emission public transport and incentives to encourage use of public transport alongside the Bus Back Better strategy in order to encourage modal shift was discussed.
- Some Joint Committee Members suggested proposing the piloting of part time use of the bus lane, but to inform this, asked what the implications on securing future funding would if a decision was implemented counter to Government guidelines. The Transport for Norwich Manager confirmed that there was clear guidance from Government on the expectation for local authorities to deliver full time bus lanes. If this scheme was delivered on a part time basis it would therefore not be seen as consistent with government guidelines and could have an impact for the Council when putting together a business case for funding from Government in the future.

8.5 With 7 votes for and 1 abstention, the Joint Committee **RESOLVED** to **approve** the proposals for Cromer Road and Aylsham Road as shown in Appendix A of the report.

## 9. Norwich Rail Station Mobility Hub

9.1.1 The Joint Committee received the report setting out proposals for Norwich rail station, Thorpe Road and Foundry Bridge junction which had been subject to a public consultation from January 2021 to March 2021; the agenda report set out details of the consultation and how comments made had been fully considered.

9.1.2 The Transport for Norwich Manager introduced the report to the Joint Committee:

- The proposals would improve access to and from the station for cyclists and pedestrians

- Changes had been made to the scheme following consultation and were set out in the report in appendix D.
- In the consultation, concerns were raised about traffic management for St Matthews Road and Chalkhill Road; more engagement would be carried out with residents and local Councillors before agreeing a way forward for these streets

9.2 The following points were discussed and noted:

- A Joint Committee Member felt that the relocating the bus stop from the station forecourt to Thorpe road could be an issue for those with luggage or not familiar to the area and asked if Koblenz Avenue could be considered instead. Officers replied that the best place to locate buses was investigated through engagement with First Bus. First Bus felt that Thorpe Road was best as this location would increase reliability of the bus timetable by reducing the time spent getting in and out of the Station site.
- The possible increase in rat running on Rosary Road and other local roads was raised as a concern.
- The importance of ensuring clear signage for visitors to Norwich was noted and suggested that covered walkways at the station could be beneficial. Greater Anglia were partners in this scheme and were keen to hear feedback; officers agreed to feed suggestions back to them to consider as part of the wider work at the Station.

9.3.1 Cllr Ben Price spoke to the Joint Committee as Local Member for Norwich Thorpe Hamlet:

- Cllr Price had concerns about the scheme and had met with residents living in the local area.
- Cllr Price was concerned that there had not been consideration on the impact of traffic flow down Carrow Road and Riverside Road where air quality was three times that recommended by the World Health Organisation. He was concerned that the increase in traffic in these areas could leave the Council open to challenge and asked for information on how the scheme would not increase traffic and worsen air quality.
- Cllr Price was concerned about the link between poor air quality and poor respiratory health, possibly leading to death in children.
- Residents of Chalkhill Road and St Matthews Road were unhappy with the proposals for one-way traffic going up the hill; this was one of the steepest roads in the city and would require them to park in an uphill direction.
- Cllr Price felt that the scheme did not address the needs of cyclists and pedestrians at Foundry Bridge Junction as it did not allow people to continue their journey along the river.
- Cllr Price suggested traffic calming measures were put in place along Rosary Road and St Matthews Road to mitigate rat running and asked for assurance that air quality would be monitored and addressed.

9.3.2 Officers replied to Cllr Price that they would monitor the impact of the scheme to understand traffic movement after implementation of the scheme compared to beforehand. Officers did not yet know what mitigations would be needed on Chalkhill and St Matthews Road but were committed to working with Cllr Price, residents and stakeholders to understand issues and potential issues moving forward with money set aside to ensure mitigations here and in the wider scheme were tackled. Two air quality stations were located on Riverside Road to provide air quality data for

monitoring. A bid had been made to the Department for Transport to upgrade the signals on Koblenz Avenue and the outcome of this was being awaited.

- 9.4 With 4 votes for 1 vote against and 3 abstentions the Joint Committee **RESOLVED**:
1. To **approve** the proposals for Norwich rail station as shown on the plan contained in Appendix D of the report.
  2. To **carry out** the statutory procedures associated with the following Traffic Regulation Orders and Notices:
    - a) New bus, cycle and taxi lane along Thorpe Road
    - b) 20mph speed limit along Thorpe Road, with consideration for extension into the wider area.
    - c) Prohibit left turns from Thorpe Road into Riverside
    - d) New zebra crossing on Thorpe Road
    - e) New length of cycle lane on Prince of Wales Road inbound
  3. **Engage** further with residents of St Matthews Road, Chalk Hill Road and surrounding area to identify appropriate traffic management arrangements to mitigate any increases in traffic on these roads.

## 10 St Stephens Street

10.1.1 The Joint Committee received the report setting out proposals for St Stephens Street developed as part of the Transforming Cities Fund programme; the outcomes of a public consultation had already been reported at the December 2020 Joint Committee meeting and since that time further design work had been undertaken based on the feedback provided.

- 10.1.2 The Transport for Norwich Manager introduced the report
- The proposals updated following the consultation were detailed in the report and included increased capacity at the bus station, retention of 2-way traffic on Surrey Street with wider pavements and a redesign of the footway on St Stephens Street
  - Officers had engaged with a bus operator in Cambridge where sawtooth bus bay arrangements were in place who reported that there were no safety issues with the bays.

- 10.2 The following points were discussed and noted:
- Information on progress towards the upgrade to zero emission buses was requested. The Transport for Norwich Manager reported that First Bus were committed to becoming zero emission. Norfolk County Council were discussing with bus operators about putting together an application for the Government's Zero Emission Buses Regional Area (ZEBRA) funding and would discuss ways forward for the transition to a zero-emission fleet in Norwich with the Government.
  - Joint Committee Members were pleased with the evidence received from Cambridge and Peterborough about the sawtooth bays which were operating successfully in those areas.
  - Officers were asked if there had been a formal response from the Norwich Cycle Campaign. The Transport Planner reported that Norwich Cycle Campaign had challenged the introduction of sawtooth bays based on their safety but this had been mitigated by maintaining a two-way flow of traffic and obtaining robust evidence on the safety of these bays from Cambridge Road Safety team and bus operators.



- Officers confirmed that changes to St Stephens roundabout were included in the original bid to Government, but when this bid was scaled back, they had to be removed from the final scheme. There were several routes into Norwich in this area, some of which were less well known, and there was a commitment to review signage and lining for cyclists to ensure alternative and more convenient routes away from heavy traffic into the city centre were easy to see.

10.3 The Joint Committee unanimously **AGREED**:

1. To **approve** the proposals for the St Stephens Street area shown in Appendices 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 2 and 3 of the report for construction.
2. To **proceed** to public consultation of the necessary traffic orders and notices to make these proposals permanent.

The Meeting ended at 16:07

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



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