

Joint Committee for Transforming Cities Fund projects

Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 July 2019 at 10am in the Edwards Room, County Hall, Norwich

Present:

Cllr Martin Wilby (Chairman) Norfolk County Council

Cllr Stuart Clancy	Norfolk County Council
Cllr Lana Hemsall	Broadland District Council
Peter Joyner	New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership
Cllr Kay Mason-Billig	South Norfolk District Council
Cllr Steve Morpew	Norfolk County Council
Cllr Jane Sarmezey	Norwich City Council
Cllr Mike Stonard	Norwich City Council
Cllr Brian Watkins	Norfolk County Council

Officers Present:

Joanne Deverick	Transportation & Network manager, Norwich City Council
Jeremy Wiggin	Transport for Norwich manager, Norfolk County Council

1. Welcome and Introductions

- 1.1 The Chairman welcomed all to the first meeting of the Joint Committee and asked Members to stay for a short briefing after the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

- 2.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Stone (Cllr Stuart Clancy substituting) and Cllr Stutely (Cllr Sarmezey substituting),

3. Election of Vice-Chair

- 3.1 The Chairman proposed Cllr Barry Stone, seconded by Cllr Hemsall. Cllr Morpew proposed Cllr Stonard, seconded by Cllr Scarmezey.
- 3.2 With 4 votes for Cllr Stone, 4 votes for Cllr Stonard and one abstention, the Chairman used his casting vote to vote for Cllr Stone. Cllr Stone was elected as Vice-Chairman for the ensuing Council year.

4. Declarations of Interest

- 4.1 Peter Joyner declared a non-pecuniary interest as he lived on a road, which was within the Scheme area of the report at item 6.
- 4.2 Cllr Jane Scarmezey declared a non-pecuniary interest as she had completed the consultation on the London Street / Bank Plain scheme as a resident of Norwich

5. Urgent Business

- 5.1 At a recent meeting of Norfolk County Council's Cabinet Cllr Douglas had raised questions about Transforming Cities Funding, which the Chairman agreed to raise at this Joint Committee meeting.
- 5.2 Cllr Douglas had asked:
1. Whether the appraisal process would we look at generalised costs and appraisal of different modes; Jeremy Wiggin confirmed that the appraisal process was a Government approved process and the strongest business case would be presented to Government. Generalised costs would be included in assessments
 2. Whether delivery of Transforming Cities Funding would be discussed with voluntary sector transport providers; Jeremy Wiggin confirmed that they would be included in discussions
 3. Whether walking and cycling would be a key element of the plans; Jeremy Wiggin confirmed that these would be a key part of the plans, including use of the Cycle City Ambition Grant

6. Site Visits for Members

- 6.1 The Chairman proposed that a site visit be arranged to allow Members of the Committee to visit the network and see areas with specific issues, areas where investment was needed and to discuss suggested solutions to address issues; this would not be a formal meeting but an information session for Members
- 6.2 The Chairman suggested the afternoon of Tuesday 30 July starting at 2pm at County Hall, Norwich and a maximum of 3 hours long. Members **agreed** this date.

7. Transforming Cities – Bank Plain and London Street

- 7.1 The Committee discussed the report outlining proposals for improvements under the £2.3 million Transforming Cities Funding allocated to the Prince of Wales Road scheme. The proposals had been subject to public consultation following the agreement to consult by the Norwich Highways Agency Committee in March 2019.
- 7.2 The following points were discussed and noted:
- The Chairman asked what the impact for people with blue badges would be of the proposal for disabled bays to be moved to one area. Joanne Deverick replied that consolidating spaces in one area should make it easier to find a disabled parking bay as they would be in one area rather than dotted about
 - It was pointed out that the kerb next to the disabled bays outside John Lewis was raised rather than lowered, which was not normal practice; Joanne Deverick replied that she would ensure disabled bays in the plan would have level access for at least part of the bay and hopefully the whole bay; levelling the kerb could be impacted by drainage issues
 - Members debated the proposed removal of disabled parking spaces on Opie street:
 - people with mobility disabilities required spaces closer to shops and facilities and removal of these spaces would cause disadvantage
 - there would be a greater demand for Blue Badges in future as they were due to be extended to people with hidden disabilities in August 2019

- People with Blue Badges could park free of charge in non-disabled on-street parking spaces or at reduced rates in carparks
- Several Members of the Committee felt it would be useful to retain the spaces on Opie street as well as having consolidated spaces on Bank Plain
- It was discussed that there could be a safety issue of drivers down Castle Meadow and on the pedestrianised Opie Street. It was pointed out however that delivery vehicles would still use the route if cars did not
- The proposed scheme would cause a net reduction of 2 disabled parking spaces; not all disabled parking spaces could be accessed due to inconsiderate parking or poor road layout
- There was demand for the disabled parking spaces
- the disabled parking sign on the entry to Bedford Street gave drivers the wrong impression that there many disabled parking spaces down Opie Street when, in fact, there was only one officially marked bay.
- Cllr Hempsall declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Blue Badge holder.
- A Member of the public who used the parking space on Opie Street outlined in the scheme was present in the audience and the Chairman allowed them to present their view: The member of the public said that Opie Street provided sufficient space for 3 cars to park; speaking as a person with ambulant disability needs, she discussed how walking from Bank Plain to Opie Street was very difficult. She recognised that she would still be able to be dropped off on Opie Street, but this would not allow her to maintain her independence, as she would have to be accompanied by an able-bodied person to drop her off.
- There were no other locations close to Opie street for other disabled spaces

7.3 The Chairman **PROPOSED** that the existing disabled parking provision on Opie Street be retained.

7.4 Further discussion was held about the report:

- A discussion was held about the provision of pay and display parking bays in the scheme, and the impact of on local businesses if there was a reduction in these or too many motorists were discouraged from driving into the City centre.
- The design in the proposal had been laid out to get as many pay and display and loading bays as possible as well as wide pavements with hidden loading bays outside Open
- Cllr Stonard reported that footfall in Norwich was up 7%, against the national trend which showed a reduction of 7%. This had been achieved by understanding the mixed offer of retail and leisure and by taking traffic out of city centre routes where it was not appropriate, while still maintaining them as through routes for parking
- It was noted that a lot of business was now done online, and this would increase further in the future, reducing the need to access the city to drop off paperwork for businesses such as solicitors
- It was felt that the work proposed to improve the appearance at the entrance to London Street would provide more incentive for business activity
- It was suggested that the pavement widening outside Open was not essential as it did not reflect the levels of footfall in this area
- The Chairman queried whether there had been responses to the consultation from people who travelled into the city; it was noted that in future consultations it would be useful to capture why people had travelled to the city on that day.

7.5 The Joint Committee **RESOLVED** to:

1. **AGREE** the proposals shown on the plans contained in Appendix 1, that will:
 - a. **IMPROVE** the section of London Street at its junction with Opie Street
 - b. **IMPROVE** the area at the eastern end of London Street, at its junction with Bank Plain
 - c. **IMPROVE** Bank Plain by widening pavements and re-arranging the on-street parking and loading facilities
 - d. **UPGRADE** Bank Street to create a more pedestrian friendly environment
 - e. **WIDEN** the light controlled pedestrian crossing on Bank Plain, and include crossing facilities for cyclists
2. **COMPLETE** the statutory procedures associated with the following traffic regulation orders:
 - a. **INSTALL** new loading facilities in Bank Plain on the western side
 - b. **CREATE** an extended blue badge parking area, motor cycle parking and further loading facilities on the east side
 - c. The **INTRODUCTION** of a restricted zone in Bank Street, maintaining the existing one-way arrangements for motorised vehicles and altering the existing pay and display bay
 - d. **REMOVE** the existing designated blue badge spaces in Bank Street ,the existing bus and coach stops in Bank Plain and the car club bay and loading bay on Opie Street
 - e. **RETAIN** the existing designated blue badge parking provision in Opie Street
3. **COMMENCE** the statutory procedures to implement an additional loading bay on Rose Lane.

8. Committee Schedule

- 8.1 The Committee considered the proposed dates for the schedule of meetings for 2019-2020
- 8.2 A short discussion was held about the Prince of Wales/Queens Street Scheme and improving signage to the station, including the suggestion of permanent signage on the roads. Cllr Stonard reported that the Business Improvement District were engaged in an initiative to to improve the corridor which included signage.

The meeting ended at 10.50.

Cllr Martin Wilby, Chairman
Joint Committee for Transforming Cities Fund Projects



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