

NANTWICH TRANSPORT GROUP

MINUTES OF NANTWICH TRANSPORT GROUP MEETING ON 14th SEPTEMBER 2010

In Attendance: Cllr. Penny Butterill (Chairman); Arthur Moran Councillor, Nantwich Town Council; David Yorke and Georgina Ross; (Wellington Road Residents Association), John Lewis Councillor, Nantwich Town Council; Dr Rick Appleton & Chris Barratt (Hospital Street Association); Cindy Biggins (Welsh Row); Annie Coombs Acton PC; PC Iain Condliffe (Nantwich PU); Malcolm McCuaig (Cheshire East Council); Bronwyn Dean (DRE) and Riddell Graham (Town Clerk, Nantwich Town Council as acting Secretary of the Group.)

Apologies: Apologies were received from Councillor Andrew Martin NTC & CEC, Maureen Corn (40 Millstone Lane, CW5 5PE).

ACTION BY

1. Welcome

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Penny Butterill, welcomed those in attendance and particularly the representatives of Cheshire East Council and PC Iain Condliffe from Nantwich Neighbourhood Policing Team.

2. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of 6th July 2010 were approved as a correct record.

3. Arising from Minutes

There were no matters arising, not already included on the Agenda.

4. Future of Highway Engineers

Malcolm McCuaig said several options were being considered. Potential externalisation of the service was among the options. In the short/medium term there was little doubt that reductions in staffing were likely. Hopefully most such reductions would be by transfer, early retirement or voluntary redundancy. The department would continue to field officers to attend meetings such as the Transport Group if possible. Whether this would be Malcolm himself was not certain at this stage. The Chairman expressed the hope that an Engineer, preferably the same person to ensure continuity, would attend the meetings. Certainly, representation by a Highway Engineer was much appreciated. MM

5. Hospital Street Air Quality

Phil Mason and Rebecca Pointon of the Environmental Health Department of Cheshire East had kindly agreed to attend the Group to present a report relating to air quality in Nantwich. Hospital Street was one of twelve areas in Cheshire which do not currently achieve air quality objectives. An Action Plan had been drawn up in 2009. There did seem to be some improvement in air quality in Hospital Street but it was still less than satisfactory.

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ACTION BY

The newly formed Environmental Health Department of Cheshire East Council (CEC) was reviewing all areas with a view to determining next steps. Various possibilities could be considered including weight restrictions on HGVs, experimental orders, even one-way systems. However, it was necessary to work closely with other CEC officers, especially the traffic engineers, and avoid conflicts with other CEC priorities. The following points emerged in discussion:-

- Rick Appleton said he had been listening to presentations like this for years. The problem had first been identified in 2004. Year after year, trivial actions were suggested. What was needed was major urgent action. Traffic should be reduced dramatically. Chris Barratt reinforced these points.
- Georgina Ross said she understood the points made but, was also concerned that changes or improvements to traffic flow in one part of the town did not have 'knock on' effects on other locations.
- Agreed that the Vision Statement would be sent to Environmental Health by the Secretary. RG
- Malcolm McCuaig reminded the Group that weight restrictions were only enforceable by the police at a fine of £60. Sometimes it was worthwhile firms taking the risk of not being caught, because of the travel cost of detours involved. Every change to traffic flows potentially had a knock-on effect and it was necessary to weigh up the overall community benefit. Funding for changes would become increasingly difficult to obtain. "Trials" with experimental traffic orders were worthwhile in the right circumstances.
- Integration of public transport and comprehensive consideration of public transport issues in the Local Transport Plan would bring major benefits.
- There would be a focus group to examine possible steps to improve air quality in Nantwich on 12th October. Environmental Health Officers would notify those involved. PM
RP

6. Wellington Road and signage

David Yorke said the position had not changed. There was a meeting with CEC Engineers on Friday 24th September. Malcolm said there were people counting traffic out now and following that count first hand data would be helpful. Suggestions already made had been considered and some of those could probably be taken on board.

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ACTION BY

7. Welsh Row traffic calming

Councillor Moran reported that the bollards and temporary signage were in place. There would have to be a re-application for “40 minute stays” in respect of restrictions on the parking bays because they had not been marked out and too much time had passed since they were originally advertised. No doubt objections would be received.

MM

Georgina said that there had been some “near misses” relating to the build-outs, especially near the School. Bollards look attractive.

MM

It was suggested that there was a paucity of warning signs which Malcolm suggested might be due to the status as a Conservation area. It was pointed out that two traffic signs for foot-paths near the aqueduct were needed.

MM

8. Vision Statement and forthcoming plans

Secretary agreed to send Group’s Vision Statement to relevant CEC officers as it did not appear to have been passed to Planners.

RG

9. Pedestrian Area on Square

All relevant signs are now erected. Malcolm expressed himself slightly concerned at the ‘drift’ which had taken place over the years so that signage on the Square had become outdated and in some cases not legal. Monitoring of traffic flow was the next step. Local knowledge would be helpful. The aspirations of the local community were important. Malcolm was suggesting local input into establishing traffic flow records.

MM

10. Update on Connect 2

Peter Foster provided an update on the proposed cycle track / bridleway (attached).

11. Gateways into Nantwich

The ambitious (£50,000) Gateway Scheme for Nantwich had been ‘axed’ but there was £10,000 still available for renewal and refurbishment of existing signage. It was agreed that a small group including Penny Butterill and Annie Coombs would pursue this with the Traffic Engineers.

PB
MM

12. Railway Station

The negative response of the Network Rail Engineers was disappointing. John Lewis was enlisting the help of Edward Timpson MP.

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13. Local Area Partnership and Highways “Joint” Committee

ACTION BY

A report on the proposed new LAP structure was given by Councillor Moran. The Joint Highways Committee type structure was no further forward.

14. Car parking problems – Whitewell Court

- (a) Councillor Moran had spoken to Paul Burns who had agreed to tidy up and sign the Shrewbridge Road car parking area near the Airman’s Grave.
- (b) The Football Club were trying to encourage people to park at the Club and walk into town. Signs were going up on 20th September at £1.50 per day and £6 for 5 days. Councillor Moran was trying to encourage the local run around bus to call at the Football Club car park.
- (c) The Railway Station had already been mentioned. Lack of co-operation by Network Rail Engineers.

15. Date of next Meeting of Transport Group

Originally fixed as 16th November but changed to **23rd November 2010** at Brookfield Hall, 4pm, at the request of the Chairman.

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