

NANTWICH TRANSPORT GROUP

MINUTES OF NANTWICH TRANSPORT GROUP MEETING ON 6TH JULY 2010

In Attendance: Cllr. Penny Butterill (Chairman); Maureen Corn (40 Millstone Lane CW5 5PE); Arthur Moran Councillor, Nantwich Town Council; David Yorke and Rachel Shenton; (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 (part meeting only) and Riddell Graham (Town Clerk, Nantwich Town Council as acting Secretary of the Group.)

Apologies: Apologies were received from Councillor Graham Fenton NTC, Councillor Andrew Martin NTC & CEC, Bronwyn Dean, DRE, David Palmer CEC Highway Engineer, Georgina Ross Wellington Rd Residents Assoc. Peter Foster, Sustrans.

ACTION BY

1. Welcome

The Chairman, Parish Councillor, Mrs Penny Butterill, welcomed those present and particularly Rick Appleton, who had been ill.

2. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of 4th May 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

The Secretary made reference to the note received from Chris Shields and explained the absence of a representative of the Highway Engineers. He was asked to write to record that the Group felt it was important that a representative of the Department attended the meetings. It was incorrect to say the Engineers were going to be 'externalised'. This was only one option which was being considered as a possibility.

Group
Secretary
(WRG)

5. Wellington Road and Signage

David Yorke and Rachel Shenton explained their meeting (together with Georgina Ross) with Chris Shields and Malcolm McCuaig of the Highway Engineers on 14th June at 8.15am. They had travelled in cars around the "old routes" and the new "signposted routes" to demonstrate the additional mileage and the more complicated directions resulting from the new routes and signage. They subsequently met at Brookfield Hall and discussed the results of the trip. The Wellington Road residents were asked for a "wish list" which they gave – subsequently re-inforcing those "wishes" and their concerns in a letter. The Engineers said this would receive careful study.

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ACTION BY

Malcolm McCuaig was on holiday until 12th July, but a response was expected shortly after that date. The Wellington Road representatives would report back on progress. Points were made about the information which had been given to the Highway Authority before the signs were erected, which seemed to have been disregarded. It was also said that when Wellington Road was closed for gas works, HGVs seemed to follow the diversion and different way round the town, without difficulty or incident. The solution, it was felt, was a comprehensive weight restriction on vehicles entering the town from all directions.

DY / RS /
GR

6. Welsh Row Traffic Calming and Environmental Enhancement

Bollards are ordered, but not yet installed, obviously. Because of a delay in implementing the Orders relating to parking bays they would need to be re-advertised. This will take place, according to Chris Shields, "in the next few weeks". Members agreed to maintain a look-out for the new adverts.

CB/AM

7. Vision Statement and Forthcoming plans.

The Vision Statement and Priorities was briefly discussed. It was agreed that it should be communicated more widely and that the group should be making representations in the Local Transport Group and Local Development Plan processes. The Secretary was asked to send copies of the Vision Statement and our priorities to appropriate officers and to make enquiries about methods of influencing policy and plans at an early stage. Weight limits and improved signage were seen as particularly significant areas for emphasis. It would be useful to have names of the right people in Cheshire East so we know who to contact with representations. The "old Highways Committee" where representations could be made directly, was mentioned.

Secretary

7a. Hospital Street.

Chris Barratt raised the question of Hospital Street and his understanding that no progress had been made in steps to improve air quality. The Secretary said that Councillor Andrew Martin had raised the matter with him, attaching an email from a former Town Councillor, Frazer don Carolis, which set out some of the main points of a recent report. As a result of an exchange of emails, Rebecca Pointon and Phil Mason of the Environmental Health Department of Cheshire East, authors of the latest report, had offered to attend the Transport Group meeting. In view of the short notice and an already full agenda, the Secretary had suggested to them that they attend at the next meeting. It was agreed that (a) the Secretary would invite the officers to the next meeting on 14th September and (b) the Secretary would try to arrange for the latest Report to be circulated before then, so Group members could read it before the meeting.

Secretary

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8. Pedestrians on the Square

ACTION BY

The bollards are installed. A 'No Entry' sign has been erected at Oat Market / High Street, but also, in error a 'One Way' sign which should have been at Mill Street. This is being rectified and the erection of 'Pedestrian Zone' signs is also going ahead shortly.

The Engineers still intend to monitor traffic going into the Square, once current works of various kinds are finished. The Town Council continue to feel that a physical barrier (e.g., gate) between certain hours at Mill Street would be a significant improvement.

For next
Agenda.

9. Update on Connect 2

Peter Foster of Sustrans had unfortunately been called to another meeting at short notice, but had sent an update. A Stakeholder Group had been formed and, indeed, had met at Brookfield Hall. The update provided by Peter read:-

- Construction started on June 7th on the section from Queens Park/King George V fields to the Rising Sun, and will be complete by autumn. It includes 3 new footbridges over the brooks. The contractor is William Pye Ltd.

- There is good news on land negotiation as the Beam Heath Trust has agreed the line of the route on its land. One other land issue, at the woodland opposite the Rising Sun has to be resolved.

- A planning application for the route from Rising Sun to Nantwich will be submitted as soon as possible. If land negotiations delay this a separate application will be submitted for the Nantwich section around The Barony due to the tighter timescale on the Links to School funding.

- The council has asked Sustrans to prepare a signing schedule for the first phase. Sustrans has subsequently raised with the council the numbering for National Cycle Network routes through Crewe and Nantwich including the Connect2 network. In particular in Nantwich there should be no break in the town centre signing of the routes so that any visitors by bike can find their way through.

For next
Agenda.

- An A4 flyer, in draft at the moment, will be available in time for the Nantwich Show, the Crewe Carnival and other summer events. This includes a request for suggestions for the portrait bench.

- The next Stakeholder Group will be on 14th September at the Municipal Buildings, Crewe.

- The next Officer Working Group meeting will be on 16th September, at Delamere House, Crewe

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The Secretary (also a Stakeholder) suggested it would be a good idea for a planning application for the Nantwich / Barony section to be submitted at this stage. Councillor Moran felt this was probably unnecessary. **ACTION BY**

10. Gateways into Nantwich

The whole of the highways capital programme is being reviewed. The Gateways scheme is on hold until the review has been completed. The Group hoped that the Gateways would not be axed, bearing in mind the late stage the scheme was at and the work which had gone into it. If, however, the new Gateways were not proceeded with, then the existing Gateway signs should be considered. One suggestion was that the Crewe and Nantwich logo could be removed from them and they could be refurbished – possibly by a local school or college. The Secretary agreed to write to the Engineers requesting that they be retained, with some lettering etc removed, as the black and white silhouette of Nantwich sign was attractive and distinctive.

Secretary

11. Railway Station

Councillor Lewis outlined the current position. Network Rail Engineers wanted to retain virtually the whole site adjacent to the station “just in case”. As a result, the economic case for a car park was much diminished. However, Councillor Lewis had drawn up a plan which illustrated a possible 20/25 car park spaces (which would just about be viable) while most of the site remained in control of Network Rail Engineers. The plan had been sent to Network Rail Estates Department, who had been much more helpful since a change of person dealing with the matter. Councillor Lewis and the Town Clerk had also expressed concern about the current state of the site, with rubble and wooden sleepers in unattractive, enclosed compounds. Photographs had been sent. The response of the Network Rail Engineers / Estates Department was awaited.

JL /
Secretary

12. Local Area Partnership and Highways “Joint” Committee

Councillor Moran, the Chairman and Councillor Lewis reported on the LAP. It was going to change its form. There would be a Local Service Delivery group – representatives of main players such as the police, social services, housing, which would meet regularly and co-ordinate action within the LAP. There would only be four or so meetings or “assemblies” of the LAP as it now stands – this would be for public attendance, questions and review. There would be an officer or officers appointed from services like Highways or Open Space Maintenance, who would relate to particular LAP areas and should be easier to identify and contact than the current arrangements.

For next
Agenda.

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Members made the point that the Nantwich Transport Group was now reporting to the LAP, so it was important that it was attended by a Highway Engineer and received accurate information about road traffic and transport issues.

Councillor Moran mentioned the former Joint Highway Committees which enabled Councillors to air concerns and have discussions about traffic orders, road closures etc. Now these matters were either delegated to Officers or in the hands of the Portfolio Holder and it sometimes seemed there was little feedback on whether actions were to be taken. The establishment of a system very similar to the old "Joint Committees" had been agreed by CEC Cabinet but then kicked into the long grass and no further progress seemed to have been made. Councillor Moran said he intended to pursue the matter in CEC.

AM

13. Car parking problems – Whitewell Court

Chris Shields said in his up-date:-

"We are aware of issues regarding parked vehicles in the area of Whitewell Close and Crewe Road. We intend to arrange a meeting with local members for the area to discuss the issues and look at possible ways forward. However, any action will need to be considered against our priorities and future budget constraints."

Councillor Moran explained problems had arisen when parking at the Cheshire Cheese had been prevented, resulting in drivers moving across the road to Whitewell Close. Councillor Moran and other Nantwich Councillors were attending a meeting to discuss what could be done.

AM

14. Date of next Meeting of Transport Group

Tuesday 14th September 2010, 4pm in Brookfield Hall was agreed for the next meeting.

(Also happens to be the date of Connect 2 Stakeholder meeting 10am Municipal Buildings, Crewe.)

All to note

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