

MINUTES OF THE FACILITIES, INFRASTRUCTURE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MEETING HELD AT 8PM ON MONDAY 17TH SEPTEMBER 2012 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC HALL, POYNTON.

PRESENT

Chairman: Cllr Alex Smith

Cllrs G Bartos, Ms R Horsman, Mrs S Horsman, Mrs J Sewart, G Smith

Attending under SO53: M Beanland, L A Clarke, P Hoyland and H Murray

20. Apologies for absence

Cllr G King

21. Declarations of interest

None

22. Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd July 2012

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Facilities, Infrastructure and Economic Development Committee meeting held on 23rd July 2012 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman (5 – 1 abs)

23. Road narrowing scheme on Clifford Road

The Chairman invited the various local residents present to express their views either for or against the road narrowing scheme that has been introduced on an experimental basis on Clifford Road.

Mr North, 35 Clifford Road

Mr North explained that the volume of traffic on Clifford Road had become unbearable and very heavy 7 tonne vehicles were also using it. Volumes had also increased as a result of the road works for the recent Poynton Village Revitalisation Scheme. Since completion of this work all except two households signed an agreement requiring a self policing width restriction. Mr North said that the width restriction currently in place is certainly not in keeping with a residential road. The road narrowing has worked to a degree however heavy vehicles are still using it because they have full access to Clifford Road from Chester Road. Mr North noted that residents were not given the opportunity to discuss and nor were they consulted on the

implementation of road narrowing. The structure has been placed outside two homes. Mr North asked why this was not placed further down the road, where there are no houses, and why the width restriction was not introduced at both ends of Clifford Road. Houses are being affected by the heavy vehicles and traffic control is needed to prevent these travelling through the area. Although the width restriction works to a degree Mr North emphasised that there needs to be some consultation with residents on issues such as the positioning and type of width restriction implemented.

Mr Anthony Sewart, Gloucester Road

Mr Sewart explained that as a result of the road narrowing on Clifford Road residents on both Gloucester and Buckingham Road have noticed an increase in the volume of traffic during peak times and on Saturday mornings. Although Mr Sewart supports the road narrowing on Clifford Road, he requested suitable measures to reduce traffic in the surrounding streets.

Mr David Bedford, 43 Clifford Road

Mr Bedford felt that the number of car movements on Clifford Road was extremely high for a residential road. He said that there are no safety features and reported that the police have said that they do not have the facility to police the road, and would like to see a more permanent solution to Clifford Road. Mr Bedford suggested the actual car usage of Clifford Road should be monitored.

Mr Keith Lambert, 71 Clifford Road

Mr Lambert expressed his thoughts on the road narrowing structure which was sited outside his house and those of his neighbours. Although he supported and signed the petition that stated traffic should be reduced around Clifford Road, there was no mention in the petition of how this would be achieved. Mr Lambert had heard that at the other end of the Clifford Road similar road narrowing was not installed following a resident's complaint. Mr Lambert asked why they were not consulted and why they were not given the same opportunity to voice their concerns. Mr Lambert raised the issue of safety regarding the positioning of the road narrowing structure and said this will be exacerbated in poor weather conditions when visibility is reduced. Mr Lambert requested that any future plans should seriously consider and re-locate the island appropriately. It should be sited safely where it is clearly visible in the middle of the road to allow vehicles to negotiate carefully around it.

Rod Barnes, 72 Clifford Road

Mr Barnes also mentioned the dangers of the traffic narrowing structure and described situations he has witnessed including drivers becoming abusive towards other drivers and cars even driving over the road narrowing structure. This also makes pulling out of his drive impossible. Mr Barnes requested a

Council member to meet him on site so that he could point out daily incidents and problems that occur as a result of the road narrowing.

Mrs Speakman, 73 Clifford Road

Mrs Speakman said that she has written and e-mailed Cheshire East about the road narrowing but has never received a reply. She pointed out that the road narrowing is not in keeping with a residential road and the recent improvements to Poynton. In addition she noted that safety should be ensured.

The Clerk explained that he had received a copy of a generic letter from the Project Manager at Cheshire East Highways dated 27th April 2012 that he assumed had been delivered to all residents on Clifford Road, informing them of the planned works. Residents confirmed that they received no such letter. The Clerk added that this is an experimental Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) and it has 6 months validity with a deadline of 1st December 2012. During that period residents and other interested parties are urged to contact Cheshire East with their views on road narrowing, for or against. One of the tasks for the Town Council is to formulate its official response to the TRO and to reflect all the views expressed.

Cllr Murray reminded the meeting that this is a temporary TRO and therefore the interim structure in place is not going to be as aesthetically pleasing. Cllr Murray's understanding of the situation was that the traffic narrowing facility had been installed at very short notice as a result of Mr Bedford's demands and a petition put to Cllr Roger West. The original intention was to have a width restriction at both ends of Clifford Road, a visual placement where drivers could recognise that the width was restricted on turning into the road rather than being stuck as they drove into the middle of the road. Cllr Hoyland along with Cllr West is one of the two Cheshire East representatives for West Poynton. On behalf of the residents Cllr Hoyland said he would arrange for Cllr West to contact and visit residents on this issue because he has led on this matter and is most familiar with the background. Cllr Hoyland accepted that it is not perfect but hoped that this could be brought to a satisfactory conclusion. He would endeavour to do his best for all residents. Cllr Mrs S Horsman added that this issue needs to be resolved as soon as possible.

Cllr Mrs Sewart explained that the neighbouring roads also need to be considered in any traffic measures placed on Clifford Road. Both Gloucester and Buckingham Roads have been particularly affected because traffic narrowing should have been introduced at both ends of Clifford Road. Both of these neighbouring roads are already very narrow and because they are considered smaller estate roads, children are used to playing on them. Cllr Mrs J Sewart suggested that if road narrowing is not sited at the Chester Road end of Clifford Road then there should be a narrowing at the junction of Gloucester and Clifford Road and also where Gloucester and Buckingham

Road join Queensway, to discourage vehicles through these roads. Cllr Mrs J Sewart also informed the meeting of the increase in traffic, van use and inappropriate truck use in this area and the problems now being encountered on these neighbouring roads. She added that Cheshire East need to be notified of all the new problems that have been raised and ask for their highway engineers to take a holistic approach in dealing with the matter. Cllr Bartos said that in his opinion traffic narrowing should be removed immediately because it is placed in a dangerous position and furthermore it is ineffective, as heavy goods vehicles are still getting through.

Cllr Hoyland also reminded residents that gritting will no longer be possible with the road narrowing in place.

RESOLVED: That correspondence from local residents concerning the road narrowing scheme on Clifford Road is received;

That the Town Council notify Cheshire East Council of the current problems this has caused, reflecting the views provided; and

That Cheshire East Highway Engineers are asked to find a holistic solution to these issues, in consultation with Cllr West (NC)

24. Traffic on Chester Road

Mr Gerry Neale, 46 Chester Road

Mr Neale raised his concerns of the heavy traffic and the associated issues of safety, noise and pollution caused on Chester Road and described the impact on residents. Vehicles are using Chester Road as an 'A' road to access the A34. He explained that vehicles are now much heavier and properties are experiencing vibration. This road needs a good infrastructure rather than the superficial fixing of pot holes. Mrs Iris Neale suggested a speed limit of 20 mph and the introduction of a speed camera to enforce this. She said lorries begin passing houses as early as 3.30am, and continue until midnight.

Cllr Clarke supported Mr Neale's comments and agreed that Chester Road is in a poor state and needs proper reinstating rather than just filling in pot holes. He also raised the issue of the railway bridge in Poynton. This is in a poor state of repair with bricks missing in parts. The Clerk said he will contact Network Rail who are responsible for the bridge. The Clerk also noted that signage providing an emergency telephone number in case of damage caused to the railway bridge is missing, and he will also follow up on this too.

Councillors recognised and sympathised with the situation that residents find themselves in with the increased volume of traffic through Poynton. Cllr Murray explained that it has been proven that signage alone does not work in reducing traffic speed, and an engineering solution such as a by-pass is required. Also the Cheshire East road network is extensive and there is

simply not enough money to provide more than a top dressing to repair roads. Cllr Hoyland added that the short term solutions are limited and explained that Councillors are working very hard and looking to the long term solution of a by-pass. This however will take time. Cllr Hoyland said together with Cllr West they will meet with Cheshire East Highways and report back.

Cllr Mrs S Horsman requested an air pollution report for London Road South. The Clerk explained that regular reports are produced, but are not forwarded to us as a matter of course. He will follow up on this.

RECEIVED: That the correspondence from local residents concerning traffic on Chester Road is received;

That West Ward Councillors Phil Hoyland and Roger West will discuss this matter with Cheshire East Council;

That the Clerk will contact Network Rail regarding the railway bridge on Chester Road (NC)

25. Lamp posts in Higher Poynton

Mrs Susan Warrington explained her concerns regarding the deteriorating condition of the old style lamp posts in Higher Poynton. She recognised that a long term process may be required if they had to be replaced because of the potential cost involved. The Chairman agreed with the general problem with the old lamp posts which are also broken in other parts of Poynton too.

Councillors discussed in detail the possibilities of either refurbishing, repainting or replacing the lamp posts. The Clerk informed the meeting that a more contemporary replacement may be required because these old style lamp posts perhaps no longer meet the safety specification. For this reason a phased programme of replacement may be necessary. Councillors agreed that it would be a shame to lose the old style lamp posts. Following discussion members agreed that a survey to find out the condition of the lights and confirmation on whether the lights do meet the required specification would be necessary. Dependent on the outcome, a decision can be made on a phased programme of refurbishment and the best way to progress this issue.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk commissions the Town Council's electrical contractor to carry out a condition survey of the older style street lights and report back, and that the Operations Manager investigate the possibility of third party grants to repaint, repair or replace as necessary (NC)

26. Car parking and enforcement in Poynton

Cllr Hoyland had submitted a written brief in advance of the meeting. He explained the issues of the Borough-wide exercise to review car parking and enforcement. Evidence to support the Poynton's view and requirements is necessary. The Chairman agreed that actions to support car parking and enforcement are very important. Cllr Mrs J Sewart asked if it would be possible for the Town Council to approach the management of the Co-op regarding the management of their private car park and the excessive fines imposed for overstaying. The Chairman confirmed that they could be contacted by the Clerk.

Cllr Clarke raised the issue of the double yellow lines along the top one way section of Clumber Road which were introduced as part of the temporary traffic management while the Poynton Village Revitalisation Scheme work was in progress. Even though this work is now completed the double yellow lines have yet to be removed to provide car parking spaces. Cllr Murray explained that it had been agreed that these yellow lines would be removed, but a change of personnel at Cheshire East Highways has caused a delay. Cllr Murray is urging for these lines to be removed as soon as possible, as agreed some months ago.

RESOLVED: That the report is received and its recommendations, including the establishment of a Working Party, be approved;

That the Clerk contact the management at the Co-op concerning their car park (NC)

27. School Lane and Queensway Revitalisation Working Groups

Cllr A Smith provided a verbal update on the revitalisation of the School Lane retail area. He explained that he is currently getting quotes and designs for planters to replace the concrete bollards along the frontage of the shops. The key task is to tarmac the front area. The site has already had a tidy up and Cllr A Smith is in contact with some of the shop owners who have an on-going programme to continue to improve the site, which will continue until end-November 2012. This does not include the rear car park, but pressure is being exerted to try to improve this area because more people will use the retail complex if the car park is improved.

Cllr G Smith provided a verbal update on the Queensway Revitalisation Working Group. He explained that a number of questionnaires have been distributed to Queensway and London Road businesses. Only two out of twenty questionnaires have been returned from Queensway, and on London Road half of the retailers had responded to date. These were positive responses. The retailers will be revisited to request them to complete and return their responses, particularly on Queensway. It is hoped that by the next

meeting a 50% response from retailers is received. Once these replies are reviewed the next step is to survey residents.

RESOLVED: That the verbal reports from Cllrs A and G Smith are received (NC)

28. Risk assessment of the trees on Lady's and Prince's Inclines

The Clerk provided a written brief on the survey and risk assessment carried out by a consultant on the Lady's and Prince's Inclines woodland. Treatment may only be necessary on three trees. However in the medium to long term the Town Council will require a strategy to deal with the woodlands on both Inclines. Councillors discussed issues raised in the report. The Clerk clarified that any work carried out will be considered on the basis of risk, or if serious shading is an issue. Cosmetic improvement will not be undertaken.

RESOLVED: That the report concerning a survey and risk assessment on the Lady's and Prince's Inclines woodland is received (NC)

29. Request for an easement of Poynton's Byelaws

RESOLVED: That the request from Poynton Round Table for an easement of Poynton's Byelaws on Parks and Open Spaces for the annual Round Table Bonfire at Poynton Park on Saturday 3rd November 2012 is approved (NC)

The meeting concluded at 9.50 pm