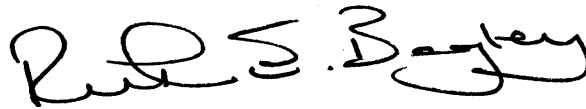


Date of issue: Tuesday, 25 March 2014

MEETING:	NEIGHBOURHOODS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL (Councillors Minhas (Chair), Dar, Dhillon, Malik, M S Mann, Plenty, Shah, Sohal and Wright) <u>Non-Voting Co-Opted Members</u> Naomi Owens (Leaseholder Forum Representative), Terry Conroy (Slough Federation of Tenants and Residents) and Vivianne Royal (Customer Senate)
DATE AND TIME:	WEDNESDAY, 2ND APRIL, 2014 AT 6.30 PM
VENUE:	MEETING ROOM 3, CHALVEY COMMUNITY CENTRE, THE GREEN, CHALVEY, SLOUGH, SL1 2SP
SCRUTINY OFFICER: (for all enquiries)	SARAH FORSYTH 01753 875657

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are requested to attend the above Meeting at the time and date indicated to deal with the business set out in the following agenda.



RUTH BAGLEY
Chief Executive

AGENDA

PART I



AGENDA
ITEM

REPORT TITLE

PAGE

WARD

Apologies for absence

CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

1. **Declarations of Interest**

All Members who believe they have a Disclosable Pecuniary or other Pecuniary or Non Pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting must declare that Interest and, having regard to the circumstances described in Section 3 paragraphs 3.25 – 3.27 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with paragraph 3.28 of the Code.

Members are asked to confirm that they do not have a declarable interest.

All Members making a declaration will be required to complete a Declaration of Interests at Meetings form detailing the nature of their interest.

2. **Minutes of the last meeting held on 27 February 2014**

1 - 6

SCRUTINY ISSUES

3. **Member Questions**

An opportunity for Panel Members to ask questions of the relevant Director/Assistant Director, relating to pertinent, topical issues affecting their Directorate – maximum of 10 minutes allocated.

4. **Traffic Congestion Working Group**

7 - 30

TO NOTE

5. **Attendance Record 201314**

31 - 32

6. **Date of Next Meeting - 3 July 2014**

Press and Public

You are welcome to attend this meeting which is open to the press and public, as an observer. You will however be asked to leave before the Committee considers any items in the Part II agenda. Special facilities may be made available for disabled or non-English speaking persons. Please contact the Democratic Services Officer shown above for further details.



Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel – Meeting held on Thursday, 27th February, 2014.

Present:- Councillors Minhas (Chair), Dar, M S Mann, Sohal and Wright (Vice-Chair)
Terry Conroy (Slough Federation of Tenants and Residents)

Apologies for Absence:- Councillors Dhillon, Malik, Plenty and Shah
Vivianne Royal (Customer Senate)

PART 1

42. Declarations of Interest

None received.

43. Minutes of the last meeting held on 8 January 2014

Resolved- That the minutes of the last meeting held on 8th January, 2014 be approved as a correct record.

44. Member Questions

None received.

45. The work of the Safer Slough Partnership (SSP)

The Community Safety Manager and the Chief Inspector, Slough Neighbourhood and local CID Team, introduced a report providing an overview of crime and disorder issues in Slough and the work of the local Community Safety Partnership in tackling those issues.

The Officer advised that the Safer Slough Partnership (SSP) contributed to Health and Wellbeing through the provision of high quality drug and alcohol services promoting positive behaviour change. The SSP also contributed to Safer Communities through working to ensure the borough was a safe place to live, visit, work and play.

The Officer confirmed that the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) highlighted crime and disorder, domestic abuse and alcohol and drug misuse as priorities, and discussed the detail of funding received from the Police and Crime Commissioner for 2013/14.

The challenges facing the SSP were outlined, and included:

- A local transient population, which made it difficult for partners to bring about long term changes in crime and antisocial behaviour and to detect crime and identify regular offenders.

Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel - 27.02.14

- High levels of new arrivals and asylum seekers in Slough, many of whom were at risk of exploitation.
- In term of population density and houses of multiple occupation (HMOs): Slough had one of the highest levels of population density and over-crowded housing in England and Wales, coupled with one of the largest population increases and widening diversity; this could act as an aggravating factor with regards to crime, including burglary and violence as well as anti-social behaviour.
- Slough had a younger population when compared to other areas and there would be an increasing demand on policing and community safety.

The Officer discussed ways in which the SSP used the JSNA to identify a number of priorities and the Panel noted agreed local targets which included a 2% reduction in burglaries and violent crime. Further targets agreed with the Police and Crime Commissioner including increasing the number of gating projects in crime and ASB hotspots.

The Officer confirmed that all crime in Slough had reduced by 18% when comparing April-December 2011 and April-December 2013 statistics which was part of an overall trend of a reduction in crime of 38% between April 2003 and March 2013. The work of the SSP had focussed on its key priorities, and had included a domestic abuse audit, alley gating projects, a Street Angels support worker and a Child Sexual Abuse coordinator.

The Officer concluded that the SSP was performing well against its targets but future performance depended on continued partnership working and focussing on joint priorities across organisations, with strong leadership from Slough Borough Council.

In the ensuing debate, Members raised a number of comments/ questions as follows:

- A Member understood that some years earlier, a £0.5 million grant had been given to Slough for Crime and Disorder. What had happened to the funds and were the monies ring fenced? It was not entirely clear to which funds the Member was referring to but Avtar Maan, also in attendance, advised she would look in to this and refer back to the Member.
- Was it the case that residents were no longer reporting crime and this is why the statistics had reduced considerably. The Chief Inspector felt that the reporting mechanisms were very robust and people continued to report crimes.
- Would recent measures to tackle prostitution drive the workers underground? Members were advised that a lot of work had been done to make sure that workers were not operating on the street but it had been found that they often moved on to another location. The Chief Inspector advised that there was a lot of CCTV intelligence available to assist with the prosecution process and priority would be given to this area of crime in the coming year.

- There had been an issue with lighting in Salt Hill Park- did this remain as an issue? It was confirmed that this issue had now been resolved.
- Was there evidence of drug crime? Yes- the police worked closely with Drug and Alcohol Action Team Partners and there was good intelligence available.
- Was work being undertaken to prevent child grooming in Slough? Members were advised that the Local Safeguarding Children's Board had done a lot of work in this area and an Officer post would be created across the Berkshire area to further this work. It was confirmed that although there had been a rise in the numbers of Looked After Children and those referred to Social Services, this was thought to be as a result of parenting and neglect: none of these were related to grooming.

Resolved- That the report on Crime and Disorder and the work of the Community Safety partnership be noted.

46. Overview of Domestic Abuse in Slough

The Safer Slough Partnership (SSP) Performance and Data Collection Manager introduced a report, providing the Panel with information regarding the incidence of domestic abuse in Slough.

The Officer confirmed that reducing the risk of domestic abuse and providing support for victims was a key priority for the SSP throughout 2013/14 and 2014/15. It was noted that victims of domestic abuse were not confined to one gender or ethnic group, and this was borne out in the figures provided by the Home Office. It was also noted that Slough had significantly higher levels of reported domestic abuse when compared to other local authorities in the Thames Valley.

The Officer highlighted that reducing the harm caused by domestic abuse remained one of the key priorities and in February 2013 Slough was addressed by 'Standing Together', who promoted a coordinated, multi-agency community response to identify key activities across the Partnership and voluntary sector. It was found that overall the performance of the Partnership was considered to be poor and a number of recommendations were made to help further strengthen Slough's strategic planning and achieve improved outcomes from service providers. These included the identification of a Strategic Lead, the appointment of a full time Domestic Abuse Coordinator, (in progress) and an increase in publicity and awareness.

It was highlighted that the SSP had encouraged victims to come forward and early intervention was important. The Council had doubled its budget for domestic abuse and most front line workers now had access to training. It was important to work with NHS and GP staff to ensure that they were aware of abuse issues and that they could also access training.

The Officer concluded that Slough had comparatively high levels of domestic abuse and this was having a significant impact on local resources in Slough.

Early indications showed that the services in place were leading to better outcomes for the protection of victims, in particular adults, and that further analysis was required to understand how the needs of children and young people could be met.

Members raised a number of questions in the debate that followed including:

- The report distinguished between 'crime' and 'non-crime'. What was the difference?
- The Officer advised that a crime was where an incident had taken place where e.g. there was a victim and a non-crime was where on the balance of probabilities the incident would amount to a crime but has not been recorded as a crime due to
 1. a) third party reports
 2. alleged victims declines to confirm
 3. alleged victim cannot be traced
 4. incident is being dealt with by another force
 5. Home Office National Crime Recording Stanrds direct a crime should not be recorded.
- Why were crimes of abuse not reported by ethnic group? It was felt that in this way communities could deal with the problem better. The Officer advised that there were data protection issues around reporting. It was confirmed by the Chief Inspector that high rates of crime would be targeted within an ethnic group if it was clear that there were particular issues prevalent.
- A Member suggested that contact be made with Mosques, Gurdwaras and Churches to highlight the problems of domestic abuse.

Resolved - That the report and Member comments be noted.

47. Interserve Performance Indicators

The Panel noted an information report provided by the Assistant Director, Housing and Environment, setting out current performance indicators for Interserve FM Ltd.

Resolved- That the information report be noted and that the item be added to the Forward Work Programme.

48. Forward Work Programme

Members noted the current work programme. Two items had been suggested for consideration by Councillor Plenty:

- Bin Collections-Customer Experience
- Water metering in Council let properties

Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel - 27.02.14

The Panel noted the reason for the call-ins and decided that these items did merit further scrutiny.

Resolved- That the items be added to the Work Programme for the new municipal year.

49. Date of Next Meeting - 2 April 2014

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 2nd April, 2014.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 7.55 pm)

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SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Neighbourhood's and Community Services Scrutiny Panel
DATE: 2 April 2014

CONTACT OFFICER: Savio DeCruz, Acting Head of Transport
(For all Enquiries) (01753) 875640

WARD(S): All

CABINET PORTFOLIO: Councillor Munawar (Commissioner, Social and Economic Inclusion)

PART I

FOR DISCUSSION

Traffic Congestion Working Group

1. **Purpose of Report**

To provide members with the progress made to date since the working group was formed in April 2013.

2. **Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

The Panel is requested to consider the progress that has made with businesses and schools to reduce peak time congestion in the borough and options for further improvements to the road network.

3. **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

Regeneration and Environment – to improve public transport, cycling and walking facilities to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions; and maintain and improve the general road network through better management of traffic signals to facilitate access to employment and improve development opportunities.

4. **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)**

Traffic congestion has been steadily increasing over the past few years and this has contributed to other problems in the borough. From a health perspective Slough has four Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA), with pollution from cars being the main contributor. The economy, regeneration and housing are vital to Slough in order to attract new businesses and development in the town.

The council is addressing these problems by delivering improvements on the public highway to facilitate better management of traffic and is working with businesses and schools to address the morning and afternoon peak periods. Improving traffic flow will help to reduce CO2 levels and providing alternatives to the car will help reduce NO2 levels which is good news for the communities inside the AQMA's.

5. Other Implications

(a) Financial

There are no financial implications of proposed action

(b) Risk Management

Recommendation	Risk/Threat/Opportunity	Mitigation(s)
None identified	None identified	None identified

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights Act Implications as result of this report.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

There is no identified need for the completion of an EIA related to the content of this Report.

6. Supporting Information

- 6.1 On 10 January 2013, the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel agreed the terms of reference for a review of traffic congestion on the highway network.
- 6.2 On 6 March 2013 findings of the Traffic Congestion on the Strategic Route Network in Slough Scrutiny Review were published. This review put forward the following recommendations:
- formation of a Working Group to investigate solutions and report back findings;
 - group to include relevant Cabinet members and a representative from the Scrutiny function; and
 - that the group's terms of reference were published for information at the next Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel.
- 6.3 On 24 April 2013 Cabinet approved the above recommendations.
- 6.4 The following are the projects and outcomes discussed at the various Working Group meetings held over the past year:
- i) delivering stages of the LTP 3 implementation plan, including bus service improvements, cycling and walking infrastructure;
 - ii) implementing the first Bike Hire scheme outside of London in the South East funded through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund;
 - iii) providing easy to access "live" traffic information to the public for bus, rail, tube and air, with further access to the Highways Agency motorway cameras;

- iv) commencing work on eight junction improvement schemes to reduce congestion and improve journey time reliability funded through the Better Area Bus Fund and ITS Capital fund;
- v) submitting a bid to the DfT for pinch point funding for the Copthorne roundabout;
- vi) increasing the number of bus stops with Realtime bus information;
- vii) providing further bus lanes operating at peak times where congestion is at its worst;
- viii) tendering of Bluetooth units and Variable Message Signs (VMS) to provide the public with journey time information;
- ix) open discussions with the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce about staggering finish times in the area;
- x) open discussions with Schools about altering start and finish times; and
- xi) exploring options for a schools bus pass scheme.

7. **Progress with Businesses**

- 7.1 Work place change has already commenced with a number of businesses including Slough BC. The group has focussed on more engagement with key organisations such as O2 to improve services to the estate.
- 7.2 Work shops and meetings have been held to encourage some of the larger companies in Slough to take on match funding projects such as cycle storage and training to encourage specifically residents to travel by other modes of transport.

8. **Progress with Schools**

- 8.1 School behavioural change is also underway and again workshops have been held recently to incentivise schools to take up cycle and scooter storage, cycle training, walking, Bike It and further improvements to encourage travel plans.
- 8.2 The schools, through the working group, have asked to start discussions with the bus operators to offer discounted bus passes to school children. This is being explored as an option to potentially increase large numbers of children taking alternative transport modes to the private car.
- 8.3 The education representative will be addressing the next schools forum about the potential take up prior to discussions with the operators.

9. **Progress with the Highways Agency**

- 9.1 Dialogue has commenced with the Highways Agency with regard to the SMART Motorway project. The project looks to utilise the hard shoulder during specific times where congestion is at its worst, to reduce journey times. The project limits are between junction 3 and 12 of the M4. The consultation is already underway with Slough exhibition being held on the 27th March at the Copthorne Hotel. The council, members and public will be invited to comment on the proposals before the scheme is submitted for approval. Work is due to commence in 2016 and be completed in 2021.

10. **Working Group Attendance**

10.1 Co-ordinating attendance with the business community and schools representatives has been challenging, results in some meetings having to be cancelled. Whilst the Group has managed to progress a number of projects, getting all the parties around the table at the Working Group meetings will be vital to achieving a cohesive approach to the transport challenges facing the borough.

11. **Conclusion**

Based on the information above it is evident that progress is being made with various initiatives including infrastructure and that this work needs to continue.

12. **Appendices Attached**

A - Traffic Congestion on the Strategic Route Network (review)

B - Minutes from the Traffic Congestion Working Group

12. **Background Papers**

None.

Traffic Congestion on the Strategic Route Network in Slough

Findings of the Neighbourhoods and
Community Services Scrutiny Panel

6 March 2013



Preface

I am happy to introduce the findings of the Neighbourhood and Community Services Scrutiny Panel's Review into the issue of Traffic Congestion in Slough.

This Review took place during the Panel's meeting on Wednesday 6 March, with the aim to starting the discussion around potential solutions to the growing problem on our strategic route network.

The Report summarises these findings and looks to set in motion further in-depth investigation of possibilities for tackling the issues through improvements in public transport and working with schools and businesses in order to ease the pressure on our roads during peak periods.

On behalf of the Members of the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel, I would like to thank all those who provided information in support of this Review.

Councillor Anna Wright
Vice Chair, Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel



Summary of Recommendations

The Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel would like to propose the following recommendations to Cabinet based on its investigations:

- 1) the formation of a Working Group to investigate possible solutions and report back on its findings;
- 2) that this Group include the relevant Cabinet Members (identifying those responsible for Transport and Education specifically) and a Representative from the Scrutiny Function (to be named at a later date); and
- 3) that the Group's Terms of Reference are published, for information, in the next agenda of the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel.

Background to the Review

1. Introduction

1.1 At its meeting on the 10 January 2013, the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel agreed the Terms of Reference for a Review of traffic congestion on the strategic route network in Slough.

1.2 The Review was intended to look at the current situation in Slough and the potential impact of future development: commercial, residential and education on the strategic route network's ability to absorb the levels of traffic expected in the future.

2. The Approach

2.1 The Review was undertaken using the following Terms of Reference:

Title	Traffic Congestion in Slough
Membership	Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel
Chairing	Councillor Minhas
Lead Executive Member	Councillor Swindlehurst – Commissioner for Neighbourhoods and Renewal Councillor Munawar – Commissioner for Community and Leisure
Strategic Director	Roger Parkin – Strategic Director, Customer and Community Services
Officers	Joe Carter – Head of Transport Gillian Ralphs – Assistant Director, Enforcement and Regulatory Services Paul Stimpson – Head of Planning Policy Sarah Forsyth – Scrutiny Officer
Objectives	To seek realistic and effective suggestions and solutions to the traffic congestion issues facing Slough on the strategic route network.
Key Lines of Enquiry	1. To investigate the measures currently being undertaken to alleviate congestion on major traffic routes in Slough. 2. To investigate methods used elsewhere, in areas with similar problems.

	3. To consider the major challenges to improving traffic congestion in Slough, and what additional/alternative steps that could be taken to improve the situation.
Operation	The Panel will produce a report following evidence gathering at the meeting, which will be submitted to Cabinet for consideration of any recommendations.
Schedule of Meeting(s)	6 March 2013
Commissioned	10 January 2012

3. Findings

- 3.1 There is a significant amount of traffic using Slough's strategic route network. On a typical weekday approximately 65,000 people commute into and out of Slough for work, including 7,200 who work at Heathrow. Of those commuting into Slough, many are destined for major concentrations of employment in the town centre, along the A4 Bath Road corridor, Poyle Trading Estate and Wexham Park Hospital. Slough Trading Estate is a key destination, currently home to 17,000 employees.
- 3.2 The private car is the most common mode of travel to work, albeit less dominant amongst those who both live and work in Slough, who are more likely to have shorter commuting distances. This latter group rate walking as the second most popular mode of travel to work (20%). For those travelling into the Borough by public transport, the train is the most popular method, predominantly through Slough station.
- 3.3 In addition to employment, schools travel can account for a significant share of traffic and already contributes towards congestion levels. Traffic levels during the morning peak hour on Wexham Road and the A4 are typically 10% lower in school holidays. Nationally during the morning peak time one in five journeys is taking a child to school; in Slough this is one in three journeys. Journeys where parents are taking children to school by car and then going on to work is one aspect, but there is also a significant proportion of parents who drive their children to school and immediately return home.
- 3.4 Slough has one of the fastest growing birth rates in the country, with a 48% increase in the number of births since 2001/2. This has led to an increasing demand for school places, initially in reception but shortly in secondary schools as well; with an additional seven to 10 classes in primary schools by 2015/16 and up to six additional secondary schools (34 classes) by 2019/20. This expansion, and the numbers accessing schools, on top of the current levels will have an impact on the ability of the strategic route network to cope.
- 3.5 The issue around school travel, with increasing demand and its link to the obesity agenda, needed to be addressed. The success of school travel plans must be looked at as the message does not appear to be reaching parents, and schools should be engaged in order to explore the possibilities of staggering start times to spread out the peak travel periods.
- 3.6 This all equates to travel in Slough being dominated by the car, with 450 million vehicle kilometres travelled in the Borough each year (excluding M4 traffic which is outside of the remit of this Review). This results in severe peak period congestion on the strategic route network. It is estimated that congestion costs the town £34 million each year in wasted travel time, and reduces average speeds by 8%.

3.7 Future development, both commercial and residential, required through the natural growth of the town means that there is likely to be a gradual increase in car ownership and increased levels of traffic on the strategic route network as a result.

3.8 In reviewing the current Council policies which could, potentially, impact on levels of traffic in the Borough, the Panel reviewed:

3.8.1 Core Strategy (including strategic objectives for Slough, Spatial Strategy and core policies designed to deliver the strategic planning policies)

- The strategic objectives are: meeting Slough's housing allocation; maintaining a sustainable buoyant and diverse economy; and encouraging the regeneration of the town centre, district centres and the existing business areas.
- The Spatial Strategy establishes the role principle of 'concentrating development but spreading the benefits to help build local communities'. This is focus future development on the town centre as the most accessible location for public transport and provides the best opportunities for carrying out more than one activity in a single journey.
- A restriction of car parking for new residential and commercial developments in the town centre, would limit the ability of those resident and/or working in the area to own and use cars, and encourage the use of public transport through the bus and train station.

3.8.2 Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3)

- Focuses on encouraging sustainable economic growth.
- Includes 12 Objectives, including:
 - to ensure that the transport system helps Slough sustain its economic competitiveness and retain its position as an economic hub of the South East;
 - to facilitate the development of new housing in accordance with the Local Development Framework;
 - to reduce transport's CO2 emissions and make the transport network resilient to the effects of climate change; and
 - to mitigate the effects of travel and the transport system on the natural environment, heritage and landscape.

3.8.3 Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF)

- An award of £4.305m made to the Council in June 2012 (paid over a period of three years, scheduled to end in March 2015) aimed at bringing about a modal shift and congestion reduction through encouraging behavioural change through the provision of attractive alternatives to car usage.
- The specific objectives of the LSTF are:
 - to improve the efficiency of Slough's businesses;
 - to support retention and growth of employment in Slough by protecting and enhancing the connectivity advantages which make Slough a good place to do business and a focus on future inward investment;
 - to reduce CO2 emissions from road traffic; and
 - to improve the health of our residents by improving air quality and encouraging active travel.
- The LSTF package contains six elements to achieve these objectives through changes in travel behaviour:
 - coordinating an employer shuttle bus club to rationalise existing services, and provide supporting infrastructure, to generate a mode shift from car to rail/shuttle bus;

- a step-change in cycling infrastructure, in particular a new east-west cycle spine route, two new cycle hubs, match-funded employer cycle grants, and a bike share scheme;
- improvements to local walking and cycling networks to improve access to security and permeability to and from key destinations;
- broadening the Intelligent Transport System (ITS) and Split Cycle Offset Optimisation Technique (SCOOT) network coverage to enhance traffic management, bus priority and real-time information on the strategic route network, together with greater parking enforcement;
- a major workplace behavioural change programme in the key employment sites in Slough; and
- a focused schools' behavioural change programme.

3.8.4 The Better Bus Fund

- An award of £1.415m made to the Council in March 2012 for the improvement of the No.78 bus service.
- The benefits of this grant will be wider than the No.78 bus service alone as it will drive improvements along the route which includes the A4 and Farnham Road, improving congestion in general.

3.8.5 The Urban Traffic Management Control (UTMC) and Common Database

- A new system being introduced in Slough which is able to assist the Signals Team in dealing with complex issues on the network through advance planning.
- Provides the ability to develop strategies for dealing with planned or non-planned events, such as processions or motorway closures, through changes to signal timings if certain thresholds are triggered by heavier traffic. Linked to the Variable Message Signs in the Borough advising motorists if there are delays.

4. Conclusions

4.1 There are a lot of programmes underway to attempt to combat the issue of traffic congestion. As these develop, particularly those attached to the LSTF, monitoring of their levels of success will need to take place; and ensuring that, where there are successes that these are built upon for sustainable solutions.

4.2 However, whilst there are a number of solutions being implemented within Slough, there are alternatives that still need to be investigated to assess whether implementing them in Slough would be a viable option. In particular, investigation should be given to the following:

- that any future work to reduce congestion levels within the Borough should also link in with the motorway network, not just the national pinch-point programme which focuses on journey reliability, but also capacity issues in this regard;
- that, whilst recognising that the Council must work in partnership with schools, a strong stance should be taken around the effectiveness of school travel plans and the potential for staggering school start times in order to extend the morning peak period;
- that thought be given to improving the accessibility of general and real time information for public transport, particularly buses, in Slough so that the customer experience can be enhanced; and
- how best to engage with major employers in the Borough to encourage alternative workforce travel patterns to help alleviate the evening peak problem.

4.3 Without further action, traffic levels could increase by at least 20% by 2026 and congestion on the A4 during peak hours is predicted to reach stress levels by 2021. Traffic congestion has already had an adverse impact on business efficiency and inward investment in Slough, and therefore is a threat to the future viability of the town.

4.2 It should be the objective of the Council, through working with partners, that various schemes to reduce the level of traffic on the strategic route network during peak hours by 10% be developed, as this could have a dramatic effect on the flow of traffic throughout the Borough and reverse any potential adverse impact on the future viability of the town.

Recommendation – that the Cabinet agree:

- 1) the formation of a Working Group to investigate possible solutions and report back on its findings;
- 2) that this Group include the relevant Cabinet Members (identifying those responsible for Traffic and Education specifically) and a Representative from the Scrutiny Function (to be named at a later date); and
- 3) that the Group's Terms of Reference are published, for information, in the next agenda of the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel.

Additional Information on Review

Witnesses

The Panel would like to thank the following for providing evidence for the Review:

- Joe Carter – Head of Transport
- Paul Stimpson – Head of Planning Policy and Projects
- Tony Browne – Head of School Services
- Savio DeCruz – Principal Engineer
- Gillian Ralphs – Assistant Director, Enforcement and Regulatory Services
- Councillor James Swindlehurst – Commissioner for Neighbourhoods and Renewal

Written Evidence

The Panel would like to thank the following for providing written evidence for the Review:

- Gillian Ralphs – Assistant Director, Enforcement and Regulatory Services

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TRAFFIC CONGESTION WORKING GROUP

25th September @ 4pm
Mercury 1, St Martin's Place

Attendees

Roger Parkin:	Director Customer & Community Services, SBC (Chair)
Tony Browne:	Head of School Services, SBC
Joe Carter:	Head of Transport Services, SBC
Councillor Malik:	Councillor for Wexham Lea
Debbie Richards:	Head teacher, Arbour Vale School
Michelle Perkins:	PA to Roger Parkin (notes)

1. Welcome and apologies

- Apologies were received from Councillor Munawar, Councillor Mann and Clair Prosser (TVCC).
- RP welcomed everyone to the group which has been set up as requested by Scrutiny Panel due to the traffic congestion issues across the town. The purpose of the group will be to look at how to manage these issues going forwards.
- The draft Terms of Reference were circulated which set out what the group wants to achieve and how they will operate. The group agreed the terms of reference.

2. Previous minutes

N/A

3. Local Transport Plan (Joe Carter)

- JC outlined SBC's Local Transport Plan which encompasses a 20 year vision of transport in Slough. The main priorities of the Plan are as follows:
 1. Environment – to reduce carbon emissions, protect heritage and habitats and adapt to a changing climate.
 2. Economy and Skills – to make sure Slough remains a competitive place to do business as well as to facilitate development for new jobs and housing.
 3. Community Cohesion – to improve access to opportunities such as jobs and education and reduce social exclusion.
 4. Health and Wellbeing – to encourage people to be fitter and healthier through walking and cycling and to improve air quality and local neighbourhoods.
 5. Safer Communities – to reduce number of road accidents and to tackle anti-social behaviour and crime.
- 1-3 year action plans have been created to deliver the aims and priorities of the plan going forwards.
- JC explained the six main packages of LSTF funding:
 1. Employer shuttle bus.
 2. Cycling Infrastructure – bike hire scheme, bike hub, cycle grants for local employers.

3. Improvements to local cycling and walking networks, footpath widening etc.
 4. ITS (Intelligent Transport Systems) – traffic signals etc.
 5. Workplace behavioural change programme – SBC visiting business to look at travel patterns of staff, encouraging walking and cycling.
 6. Talking to local schools.
- Please see link below to view the full Local Transport Plan on SBC's website:
<http://www.slough.gov.uk/council/strategies-plans-and-policies/local-transport-plan-ltp.aspx>

4. Effects on Schools and Businesses

- JC explained that the difference in the level of traffic on the roads between term time and school holidays is as little as **10%** therefore we are looking at the redistribution of a small proportion of traffic to make a noticeable difference.
- Morning peak issues are all brought about by school traffic. The number of schools and pupils in Slough has a huge influence. A possible solution could be to look at changing school opening times, term times.
- Evening peak issues are largely governed by businesses due to the large number of staff leaving offices at 5pm. A possible solution could be to look at options of flexible working, working from home and challenging business to change working hours.
- The group will look at these options and decide whether they are appropriate and/or come up with alternative ideas.

- JC outlined some of the work already ongoing to help deal with traffic and congestion:
- **Better Area Bus Fund** – this encourages people to use public transport by improving the service and creating extra bus lanes so they can bypass the queues.
- **Improvements to traffic lights.**
- **Urban Traffic Management Control Centre** – this links all transport information into one place which the public can access. It will provide information about road works and how long they are likely to be going on. It will also provide real time passenger information regarding tubes, airports, buses and railway and provide the information to businesses to allow them to make travel choices. Currently still in development. It should be launched next month. SBC's role in this is to manage the network.

- The group decided upon the following ideas to investigate:
- Talk to schools to ask about the average journey to and from school and determine whether behavioural changes are needed where it is less than a mile.
- DR confirmed that schools would be able to provide this information. However, pupils are often scattered across the Borough and parents often have to drive to drop them off at various schools and the buses are not reliable.
- TB said it is important to create school places near to where they are needed and that there have been improvements in this area.

- JC asked whether information could be found about how many families have pupils scattered across the Borough. If it is a minority, the focus could be on getting the majority walking to school.
- DR said that the teachers who commute to Slough then take a taxi from the station to the school could take the bus if the service was improved.
- Could also look at teachers who drive in from outside the Borough and look at other ways such as car sharing.

- JC summarised the main areas to investigate as a starting point as follows:
- School and Businesses start times. The starting point will be to gather the information from schools and also from TVCC about flexible working of local businesses.
- **Action:** MP to contact Clair Prosser to ask for the information prior to the next meeting.
- Look at incentives such as free fruit for pupils who walk to school.
- Issues are that parents might not feel it is safe to walk and they also might be busy and need to get to work.
- TB suggested introducing financial incentives such as free bus passes. Free school buses.
- RP suggested approaching local supermarkets to ask about free fruit, free smoothies for pupils who walk to school.
- Information also to be collected from schools about how many pupils live within half a mile of the school.
- **Action:** DR to gather the relevant information prior to the next meeting.
- JC reiterated that only a small reduction in traffic is needed. Such as 10% per day or 20% every other day. Any amount would help and it doesn't have to be all the time.

Future meeting dates to be confirmed

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TRAFFIC CONGESTION WORKING GROUP

12th November @ 4pm
Jupiter 1, St Martin's Place

Attendees

Roger Parkin:	Director Customer & Community Services, SBC (Chair)
Tony Browne:	Head of School Services, SBC
Savio DeCruz:	Acting Head of Transport Services, SBC
Councillor Malik:	Councillor for Wexham Lea
Debbie Richards:	Head teacher, Arbour Vale School
Michelle Perkins:	PA to Roger Parkin (notes)

1. Welcome and apologies

- Apologies from Clair Prosser (TVCC). No other apologies were received.

2. Previous minutes and actions

- Minutes of 25th September 2013 were agreed as a true and accurate record.
- RP will pick up the action regarding information about the flexible working of local businesses for the next meeting.
- DR will pick up the action regarding data from schools (regarding the number of pupils living within half a mile of the schools) ready for the next meeting.

3. Local Transport Plan (Savio Decruz)

- Savio DeCruz introduced himself as Acting Head of Transport and provided an update on the Local Transport Plan as follows:
- **Local Implementation Plan:** 3 year plan based on a £1.2m grant from Government which is divided into categories for road safety, bus infrastructure, cycling, walking and network management.
- An additional million was also awarded in March 2012 to improve traffic signals in the borough.
- Junctions have been designed along the A4 and other key locations.
- **Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF):** received £4.3m geared towards traffic reduction.
- Visits have been taking place to the 7 or 8 schools across the Borough who signed up to the LSTF to ask them to assist in delivering outcomes by encouraging children to walk or cycle to school and to use school buses and car sharing methods.
- Some of the £4.3m also went to businesses and work is also being done with them to look at alternative options and measures.
- **20 mph zones:** a policy was signed off to look at introducing these zones in proximity to schools to reduce spends and ensure parents it is a safe area in which to cycle and walk.
- The scheme is relatively low cost with the main cost being in consultation.

- Need support from schools to engage with the public and ensure it happens.
- **SM asked about the impact of enforcement cars:**
- SD reported that 48 penalty notices have been issued in the last 2 weeks, although it will take some time to change people's behaviour regarding parking.
- Cippenham Infants and Primary School zones have been changed to one way 20mph and the amount of parents dropping children off has reduced. They are now parking elsewhere and walking to the schools.
- The aim is to get back to the scenario of children who live in the vicinity walking and cycling to school.
- There are still opportunities for schools to sign up to the LSTF.
- **RP asked how we are engaging schools about the LSTF:**
- SD confirmed that communications are being sent to schools via the gatekeeper system, flyers are being sent and a 'bike it' officer has been going in to schools to give talks.
- **SM raised the issue as to whether schools could change their start times:**
- SD said the biggest rejection is likely to come from parents, particularly those travelling straight to work once they drop the children off at school.
- DR said schools already have a range of start times in place.
- DR said the other issue is the availability of school places and parent's preferences.
- **Better Area Bus Fund:** Received £1.4m allocation from the Department for Transport (DFT) in 2012.
- Work has started on Farnham Road and will run until March 2014. The work being done is to encourage bus use and look at traffic congestion.
- The first phase is Tuns Junction to the Windrush Garage and the second phase is Whitby Road to Buckingham Avenue.
- Farnham Road is a problem area caused by the bridge, the peak time bus lane will assist in reducing these delays.
- The bus lane south of the bridge (Windrush to Metro Bank) will be operate in peak times only (7am – 10am and 4pm – 7pm). Outside of these times any vehicle will be able to use it.
- This increases journey time reliability for the bus no.78 to Heathrow.
- Upgrades are also being introduced with a Toucan junction at Buckingham Avenue to allow cyclists to use it and there will be an upgrade to a full pedestrian junction at Whitby Road.
- There is also a new pedestrian crossing being added at the junction of the Farnham Road and Salt Hill Way.
- Signal software is being upgraded at the Tuns junction which will look at where the traffic is and prioritise those areas of the junction.
- The same system is also in place on Windsor Road and in the Heart of Slough.
- A significant reduction in traffic congestion from March onwards is expected as a result of these changes.

- Windsor Road/Ragstone junction and Windsor Road/Herschel junctions are being upgraded over the next 7 months. A further 8 junctions along the A4 are also being upgraded between now and the end of March.
- SD confirmed that the Programme of planned works has been received and the information will be circulated. Members will also be kept informed.
- RP commented that some of the works going on are due to private companies, not the Council and people need to be made aware of this.
- SD said there is a programme in Network Management which manages who works on the network at strategic times and the hours they work and whether roads are closed. However, emergency works cannot be stopped.
- They are also looking at introducing a permit scheme whereby utility companies who want to carry out work on the roads have to submit a permit to work on the highway. They would be inspected and fined if they don't do it correctly.
- **SM asked where the fine goes:**
- SD confirmed that it is used to go back into improving the network and reducing congestion.
- Looking to roll out a permanent permit scheme between now and 2015. Members will need to be briefed, permission gained from DFT and consultation with utility companies.
- Major works are also being undertaken on Horlicks Bridge in December 2014.
- TB asked for a summary of works to share with schools and Community Transport.
- **Action:** SD confirmed that he will produce a briefing note.
- **Action:** RP will pick up with Bob Jones from SBCP.
- SD confirmed they are also looking to roll out a webpage of real time information. A press release regarding this will be sent out in the next two weeks.
- Any business will be able to access the site and look at live information on road works, bus times, Highways Agency cameras from the M4 and M40 to check traffic, BAA information on terminals 1 to 5, underground information.
- 2 other LSTF funded projects are going out to tender:
 - 1) **Variable Message System (VMS)** – to be installed at a further five locations.
 - 2) **Bluetooth units** – to be installed at 30 different locations around the Borough to pick up how long it has taken and then notify the VMS if delays are to be expected.
- In terms of timescales it is thought that by the end of the financial year / summer next year we will be in a better position regarding making informed journey decisions.

SD
RP

Next meeting: 10th December 2013 @4pm, Jupiter 2, St Martin's Place

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TRAFFIC CONGESTION WORKING GROUP

10th February 2014 @ 4pm
Roger Parkin's Office, St Martin's Place

Attendees

Roger Parkin:	Director Customer & Community Services, SBC (Chair)
Tony Browne:	Head of School Services, SBC
Savio DeCruz:	Acting Head of Transport Services, SBC
Councillor Malik:	Councillor for Wexham Lea
Maria Nolan:	Deputy Head teacher, St Joseph's School
Michelle Perkins:	PA to Roger Parkin (notes)

1. Welcome and apologies

- Apologies from Clair Prosser (TVCC) and Debbie Richards (Arbour Vale School). No other apologies were received.

2. Previous minutes and actions

- Minutes of 12th November 2013 were agreed as a true and accurate record.
- RP will speak to Bob Jones again.
- A briefing note regarding summary of works was circulated to schools via the gatekeeper system as agreed.

3. Local Transport Plan (Savio Decruz)

- SD provided an update on the Local Transport Plan as follows:
- Phase 1 of Farnham Road works has been implemented.
- Phase 2 works at Buckingham Avenue and Whitby Road have started.
- Cycleway Langley Road, A4 Langley Road, A4 Langley High Street, junction 5 to Sutton Lane, A4 Upton Court Lane, A4 Tuns Lane are all being upgraded in terms of signal modifications and software infrastructure.
- Additional bus lanes are being created on Buckingham Avenue A4 junction and Lynwood Avenue Upton Court Road.
- Road widening on the A4 is taking place.
- These works are designed to improve the bus service from Slough to Heathrow and general traffic flow.
- 8 junctions in total are being upgraded.
- A new pedestrian crossing will be installed outside the Tesco junction – due to start end of March.
- SCOOT has been rolled out on Farnham Road; this measures traffic day by day and how many cars are travelling through that stretch. Stoke Road will follow in March and be completed by the end of March.
- 20 mph part time speed limits outside schools has been approved by the DFT and will be rolled out. The first one will be outside Claycots School on Montem Lane.
- Transport for Slough webpage was launched in December which includes live traffic information and is accessible by the public. We will

also be launching our own traffic monitoring cameras over the next 5-6 months so the public can log on and access the information.

- Air pollution monitoring – working with Jason Newman to compare the before and after data from the capsules that measure air quality.
- Better Bus Scheme – will re measure the how long it takes to travel from Slough to Heathrow Terminal 5 when junctions are completed and then compare it to the before data.
- Slough Bike Hire scheme is going well.
- Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF): 7 schools have signed up to the scheme to improve their facilities for bikes to encourage more cycling and walking.
- Money is still available for other schools to participate. There is one more year of funding, ending in March 2015.
- 3 officers have been going into schools to work on Travel Plans or come up with alternative measures.
- A reminder about the scheme was included in the briefing note that was sent to schools.
- **Action:** SD will send another briefing note via the gatekeeper regarding the scheme.

SD

4. Effects on Schools and Businesses

- First buses want to operate incentives on a school by school basis and come up with a plan to best suit each school.
- RP said we need to get sign up from schools as a whole and we need to look at how to take this forward as a group – what can we do to encourage pupils to use public transport or cycle – i.e flat rates or oyster type cards.
- Pick up incentives with First Bus.
- Engage with schools with an offer and get sign up.
- Look at what the deal will look like, check funding.
- Discussed Bikeability scheme.
- **Action:** SD to send information to schools via the gatekeeper.
- MN raised the issue of children not wearing cycle helmets.
- SD confirmed that wearing cycle helmets is part of the Bikeability Scheme although the government haven't made a decision on whether to make it illegal not to wear a helmet.
- The bike has to be fit and a helmet has to be worn to take part in the training.
- **Action:** SD will attend SSEF to have an initial discussion then invite First Bus to a future SSEF meeting. TB will find out meeting dates.
- First Bus are also working with big businesses to offer cheaper services.
- More work to be done with businesses.
- **Action:** RP will pick up with Shabnam Ali, via 'Open for Business' and the various Boards she attends.

SD

TB/SD

RP

5. AOB

- MN raised the issues regarding parking at St Joseph's School and that the school bus service costs £70 per child per month to use.
- SD suggested officers make a visit to the school to have initial dialogues about alternatives.
- 20 mph scheme – three on their way and are being designed.

- Lynch Hill already have one which was introduced last year.
- Part time 20mph using variable speed limit signs.
- Currently working on one from Whitby Road to Stoke Poges.
- Also a few others, no funding available yet but working on designs to get them ready.
- RP said there is a need to monitor the number of incidents, accidents where these schemes are introduced to indicate they are working and compare data from areas with/without the schemes in place.
- SM said she wanted to make a request for a sign/crossing in Wexham – SD advised her to send the request to fs@slough.gov.uk so that it can be picked up by the official channel.

Next meeting: 20th March 2014 @4pm, Mercury 2, St Martin's Place

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MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE RECORD
NEIGHBOURHOODS & COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL 2013-14

COUNCILLOR	MEETING DATES							
	19/06/2013	05/09/2013	30/10/2013	06/11/2013	08/01/2014	27/02/2014	02/04/2014	
Dar	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	
Dhillon	Ab	P*	P*	Ab	Ab	Ap	Ap	
Malik	P	P	P	P	Ap	Ap	Ap	
M Mann	P	P*	P	P	P	P	P	
Minhas	P	Ap	P	P	Ap	P	P	
Plenty	P	P	P	P	P	Ap	Ap	
Shah	P	P	P*	P	P	Ap	Ap	
Sohal	P	P*	P	P	P	P*	P*	
Wright	P	Ap	P	P	Ap	P	P	

P = Present for whole meeting P* = Present for part of meeting
 Ap = Apologies given Ab = Absent; no apologies given

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