

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