



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

Tuesday 20 March 2012 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor J Moher (Chair), Councillor Powney (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Beswick, Jones and Long

Also present: Councillors Chohan and HB Patel

1. Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests

None declared.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 February 2012 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Matters arising

Willesden Junction and Wembley Central station issues

In response to Councillor Long's request for an update, Tim Jackson, Head of Transportation reported that the re-scheduled meeting about Willesden Junction had taken place. He undertook to communicate the feedback from the meeting to all ward members as soon as he received it.

4. Deputations

None.

5. Petitions

The petition from Al-Sadiq and Al-Zahra School which requested the Council to remove what it considered an excessive number of Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) and the CCTV vehicle outside the schools stated as follows:

“We the undersigned petition the Council to remove the excessive number of traffic wardens and the CCTV enforcement vehicle found outside Al-Sadiq and Al-Zahra School.”

Ms Saba Samurai, a parent governor of Al-Sadiq school in addressing the Committee stated that the level of traffic enforcement was excessive. She continued that the number of traffic wardens (5) patrolling the school vicinity was intimidating and was viewed by the Islamic community as a form of racial discrimination. She added that the excessive number of wardens and the level of enforcement were unnecessary for a school where 50% of the parents were car sharing. She felt that the best approach was for the Council to speak to the school authorities initially about any concerns it had about parking before introducing the enforcement controls.

Abed Choudhary speaking on behalf of Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC) stated that as no other school within the borough had had that level of parking enforcement, Al-Sadiq and Al-Zahra schools in Chevening Road considered that the Council had over-reacted to the situation. He added that the behaviour of the traffic wardens was considered aggressive and inappropriate and urged the Council to relax the enforcement both at the start and end of the school day.

6. Petition enforcement wardens outside Al Sadiq and Al Zahra Schools in Chevening Road

David Thrall, Head of Service (Safer Streets) introduced the report that responded to the petition regarding parking enforcement deployed near to Al-Sadiq and Al-Zahra school in Chevening Road. In providing the background, he stated that enforcement around the school was increased in response to persistent complaints about non-compliance with parking controls. As a result of the concerns expressed in the petition, a meeting was held with the school to determine the practicable and useful way to address the problem.

Al-Sadiq and Al-Zahra schools (The Foundation) indicated a willingness to consider developing a travel plan for the schools which would effectively reduce the likelihood of pupil injury and reduce the environmental impact of school travel. The school-led initiative would be fully supported by the Council through the School Travel Officer with a future meeting to be convened to explore the plans in greater detail. He added that the development of a travel plan would provide a useful vehicle with which to improve the situation whilst recognising the Council's obligations and policies.

The Chair expressed concerns on behalf of the Committee about the speaker's allegation of racial discrimination and pointed out that the matter related to parking enforcement around the school which was a common problem in areas near to schools. He added that under those circumstances where parking was a problem, it was reasonable to expect some form of enforcement. The views expressed by the Chair were shared by Councillor Beswick. Councillor Powney added that officers should ensure that the Council's equality duty was adhered to in assisting

to develop the school-led travel plan. He also enquired as to when the Committee would receive a further report on the measures. In response, David Thrale stated that the matter would be reported to the Committee around September or October 2012.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the contents of the petition and the issues raised be noted;
- (ii) that the course of action taken by officers to support the school in its initiative to develop a travel plan be endorsed;
- (iii) that a further report on the production of a school travel plan incorporating the Council's equality duty be submitted to the Committee's meeting in September/October 2012.

7. Response to petition seeking the lifting of the special parking restrictions introduced each year within part of the KQ Controlled Parking Zone

The Committee considered a petition which called on the Council to lift parking restrictions for part of KQ controlled parking zone (CPZ) during the periods of Ramadan and Muhurram. The petition stated as follows:

"We the undersigned petition the Council to lift the special parking restrictions imposed around Imam Khoei Islamic Centre in order for those visiting to be able to park as they would otherwise during the year."

The petition was presented by Mustapha Field. He complained about the existing parking restrictions (8:30am to 6:30pm) which were extended twice a year during periods (Ramadan/Muharram) at the Mosque when there were high levels of visits to the Imam Khoei Islamic Foundation Centre. He continued that the extended hours were disproportionate and added that the levels of visits were not as high as for the Temple in Brentfield Road where there were no extended parking restrictions. Mustapha Field urged the Committee to reverse the extended controlled parking hours around Imam Khoei Islamic Centre in Chevening Road and within the KQ zone.

Tim Jackson, Head of Transportation introduced the report that responded to the petition. He advised members that the current arrangements were not necessarily "tuned" to the variation in visitors to the area that occurred during Ramadan and Muharram. There may be times during those events where the arrangements could be adjusted so as to better respond to the potential problem. He continued that the Foundation had been unable to provide data (on timings, visitor numbers, travel choices etc.) to enable officers to recommend changing the current arrangements. He recommended the setting up of a working party comprising officers, ward members, residents' representatives, the lead member and the representatives of the Foundation to examine the current arrangements with a view to identifying

opportunities to make changes that would satisfy all parties without compromising council policies or obligations.

Tim Jackson informed the Committee that if the working party were to identify changes that would improve the situation during the 2012 events these could be implemented and their impact monitored. If the opportunities for improvement could not be identified in time for 2012 (July 2012) the current arrangements would have to remain in place. He added that any arrangement identified would need to go through the normal process of advertising, consultation, the making of Traffic Orders and a further report for consideration of any recommendations before being implemented.

In welcoming the report, Councillor Powney reiterated the need for officers to adhere to the Council's equality duty.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the contents of the petition and the response of officers be noted;
- (ii) that the Head of Transportation be instructed to review the operation of the current arrangements, in consultation with representatives of local residents, ward members, the lead member and the representatives of the Foundation in order to identify opportunities to adjust and improve the arrangements;
- (iii) that where opportunities to make improvements were identified then changes should be made, if practicable and subject to proper consultation and consideration of responses to that consultation, in time for the 2012 Ramadan and Muharram periods;
- (iv) that if opportunities for acceptable changes cannot be identified the current arrangements should continue in place, subject to the appropriate advertising and making of Traffic Orders etc.

8. Response to petition seeking introduction of specific traffic calming measures in Brooksville Avenue

The Committee received a petition from residents of the area via Vanessa Pilkington requesting the urgent introduction of specific traffic calming measures along Brooksville Avenue.

The petition stated as follows:

"I request that Brent Transportation Department install a central island at each end of Brooksville Avenue and take any other measures that will slow down traffic and reduce the risk of further accidents."

Ms Vanessa Pilkington in addressing the Committee stated that all surrounding and neighbouring streets had some form of traffic calming measures including speed bumps except Brooksville Avenue. As Brooksville Avenue was a wider road, it facilitated speeding. She referred to the road accident fatality that occurred there a year ago. She continued that the current situation posed a danger to pedestrians and in particular, school children as Brooksville Avenue was surrounded by six (6) schools. Ms Pilkington noted that the report recommended implementation of the traffic calming measures in Brooksville Avenue in 2014 but residents considered that to be too distant to prevent the danger of further accidents occurring in the meantime. She urged the Committee to bring forward the proposal for the introduction of traffic calming measures including speed bumps and traffic islands.

Hossein Amir-Hosseni, Team Leader (Design), in his introduction stated that the Council had been aware of the aspiration of the community for traffic calming within the area, via initially the Queens Park Area Residents Association (QPARA) and subsequently the lead petitioner. Regular correspondence had taken place on the issue and officers had attended several meetings to discuss the matter over the last 3 years since the adjoining 20mph zone to the north was completed. QPARA were also involved with that scheme.

He continued that it was the Council's policy to support the introduction of a 20mph speed limit on all residential roads where it was supported by the local community. However the high demand for it had required its rollout to be prioritised on a needs basis with the locations with the greatest issues being treated first. He clarified that the funding for this type of scheme was provided to Brent by Transport for London (TfL) via an annual Local Implementation Plan (LIP) bidding process with a programme of schemes outlined a number of years in advance. He added that within the annual LIP funding, there was sufficient funding to implement on average only two 20mph zone type projects per year.

Hossein Amir-Hosseni therefore proposed that the design and consultation of the Chevening Road area scheme, including Brooksville Avenue, should go ahead as currently programmed within the 2012/13 financial year with subsequent implementation within the 2013/14. He added that as part of the scheme traffic calming measures to reduce vehicular speeds including narrowing and introduction of a traffic island would be developed for Brooksville Avenue/Salusbury Road junction, and if viable both would be consulted on as options. He also added that options for measures at the Kingswood Avenue junction would also be developed and considered for progression. Residents would be invited to a meeting prior to consultation.

In response to questions, the Head of Transportation, Tim Jackson, advised that although the TfL funding arrangements restricted opportunities to bring the scheme forward if an opportunity to do so using an alternative funding regime became available it would be seized.

In welcoming the report and its recommendations, members emphasised that should an opportunity for funding be identified in advance, the implementation date for traffic calming measures in Brooksville Avenue be brought forward.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the contents of the petition and the issues raised be noted;
- (ii) that the course of action taken by officers in relation to the issue that the proposals would be incorporated into the plans for the Chevening Road area 20mph scheme which would be designed in 2012/13 with a view to implementation in 2013/14 be noted.

9. Consultation on the possible introduction of a Controlled Parking Zone in association with the new Brent Civic Centre and other developments in Wembley

Hossein Amir-Hosseini, Team Leader (Design), presented a report that outlined the results of consultation undertaken with residents and businesses in an area around the Civic Centre site, into the possible introduction of a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) into that area. He continued that the consultation demonstrated that there was no significant support for the introduction of a CPZ as 56% were not in favour of it. He added that in accordance with Council policy that where there was no majority support for it CPZ would not be introduced, the report recommended that the proposals should not be progressed further at this time.

Officers would however investigate the need for waiting restrictions within the area to ensure road safety at junctions in particular was not compromised and, where they were essential, implement the restrictions subject to the normal consultation arrangements being followed.

Mr Robert Dunwell speaking on behalf of Queensbury Area Residents Group of Association (QARA) spoke in support of the recommendations and urged members to accept them.

Councillor HB Patel also spoke in support of the recommendations not to proceed with the introduction of the CPZ proposals at this stage.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the results of the consultation into the possible introduction of a CPZ be noted and the Head of Transportation be instructed not to progress proposals further at this time;
- (ii) that the Head of Transportation be instructed to investigate the need for additional waiting restrictions within the area to ensure that road safety was not compromised and, where those restrictions were essential, that they should be implemented subject to the normal consultation arrangements being followed.

10. **Report on progress of preparations for the management of traffic and parking in support of London 2012 Olympic events at Wembley Stadium and Arena**

Sandor Fazekas, Assistant Head of Highways and Civil Engineering introduced the report which provided an update on arrangements specifically for the management of traffic and parking during the games period for the events to be held at Wembley Stadium and Arena. He highlighted the significant impact that the games would have on Brent as Wembley Stadium and the Arena would be hosting events. He continued that aware of this, officers had been working closely with the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG), the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA), the Government Olympic Executive (GOE), the Greater London Authority (GLA) and Transport for London (TfL) on transport and parking arrangements for the games.

In reference to the report he identified the roads that had been designated as Olympic Route Network (ORN) to enable the 'Olympic family' (athletes, officials and support team to get around London with the minimum of delay. He added that the ORN would come into operation on the 25 July 2012. He continued that in addition to consultations that were taking place with local businesses and residents, there was a wealth of information on the TfL and the Council's website.

Mr Robert Dunwell in addressing the Committee sought assurances from the Committee that in future officers would submit detail cost of additional work involved to assist with monitoring.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the progress on transportation and parking arrangements being made for the delivery of a successful Olympics in the Borough be noted;
- (ii) that officers be instructed to provide a further update to members on final arrangements for transportation and parking for the games at the future meeting of the Highways Committee.

11. **Consultation on Harlesden Town Centre scheme proposals**

John Dryden, Senior Traffic Engineer introduced the report that informed members of the results of the recent public consultation on the Harlesden Town Centre "Major Scheme". He advised the Committee that Transport for London's (major scheme) funding regime provided an opportunity for the Council to develop and implement schemes to improve the operation and appearance of town centres so as to support the vibrancy and vitality of those town centres. He continued that officers were currently working on a scheme for Harlesden Town Centre with the aim of securing up to £4 million to deliver the proposals which would support the development of a sustainable town centre.

John Dryden outlined the consultations and the responses received as set out in the report and drew members' attention to the close partnership arrangement between the Council and a local community group (the Harlesden Town Team 2010) that led to the publication of the 'Harlesden Town Charter – A Vision for Harlesden'. He then referred to the options available as set out in the report and recommended the adoption of option B.

Mr Ron Chambers in addressing the Committee referred to letters and drawings he had sent to members which requested the adoption of option A. He added that option A had the advantage in that it could be started straightaway. He also enquired as to what would happen if option B failed.

In relation to the shared space element within option B, Mr Tom Reid speaking on behalf of Brent Association for Disabled Persons highlighted the dangers faced by blind persons as a result of vehicular traffic movement, including bicycles. He also informed the committee that trees and bends also posed dangers to blind persons particularly when they were unable to discern the differences between clear roads and spaces.

Mr Paul David also opposed to the concept of shared spaces as visually impaired persons were unable to tell the difference between moving traffic and other objects. He enquired as to whether visually impaired persons were consulted via talking newspapers/newsletters, a common practice around the country.

Mr Leroy Simpson, Chairman of Harlesden Town Centre Team spoke in support of option B as set out in the report. He added that the level of consultation responses was above average and that the recommended option B reflected the views and preferences of the majority.

Anna Denneman of the Harlesden Town Centre Team stated that the initial concerns expressed in the consultation had been addressed by the Council. In endorsing option B, she added that it would provide a real opportunity to change Harlesden as a car dominated town centre.

In responding to some of the issues raised, John Dryden stated that BADP and other groups including those representing the visually impaired would continue to be consulted on the proposals. He continued that trees were useful in urban design and that street furniture would be located in clear and uncluttered areas to ensure that the problems raised concerning the visually impaired were addressed. He added that shared surface and spaces would reduce the dominance of cars in the town centre and coupled with traditional ways of crossing, would give more freedom to pedestrians. He advised the Committee that the Council had arrangements that sought to prevent any adverse impact on visually impaired persons. In response to a request from the local Methodist Church, he stated that exemptions would be made available for their weddings and funerals.

Councillor Beswick welcomed the proposals, a view also shared by Councillor Jones. Councillor Powney also welcomed the proposals but requested officers to re-visit the use of dog mess bins. The Chair emphasised that detailed proposals for

shared space had not been finalised as yet. Councillor Long moved an amendment to reflect concerns over disabled parking provision and the shared space element within option B. This was put to the vote and declared lost. In the ensuing vote on the substantive recommendations, Councillor Long asked that her dissent be recorded.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the results of the recent consultation into options for the Harlesden Town Centre Project be noted and officers be instructed to proceed with option B, including recommendations identified within section 6.10 of the report, subject to confirmation of funding from Transport for London and completion of the necessary statutory consultation;
- (ii) that the Head of Transportation be authorised to consider any objections and representations to the statutory consultation and to report back to Committee if there are significant or substantial objections or concerns raised, otherwise to implement option B;
- (iii) that a progress report be prepared and reported back to Committee during the autumn 2012 prior to commencement of the works on site.

12. Any Other Urgent Business

None.

13. Date of Next Meeting

The date of next meeting will be confirmed after the Annual meeting of the Council on 16 May 2012.

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm

J MOHER
Chair