

Rayleigh Traffic Study Sub-Committee – 27 June 2003

Minutes of the meeting of the **Rayleigh Traffic Study Sub-Committee** held on **27 June 2003** when there were present:-

Cllr Mrs M J Webster (Chairman)

Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn
Cllr J E Grey
Cllr A J Humphries
Cllr C A Hungate

Cllr T Livings
Cllr R A Oatham
Cllr J M Pullen
Cllr D A Weir

OFFICERS PRESENT

S Scrutton - Head of Planning Services
K Bristow - District Manager, Transportation & Operational Services,
Essex County Council
J Bostock - Principal Committee Administrator

9 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 30 May 2003 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

10 RECOMMENDATION FROM FINANCE AND PROCEDURES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (MINUTE 257/03)

The Sub-Committee concurred with the view of the Chairman that it was beyond the terms of reference of the Rayleigh Town Centre Sub-Committee to give consideration to the provision of more car parking spaces in Rayleigh town centre.

Members observed that indiscriminate parking in the town centre was an issue. It would be more appropriate for there to be a full review of the parking position nearer the time that parking enforcement is decriminalised.

11 THE WAY FORWARD – FEEDBACK FROM CONSULTATION

At this stage the Head of Planning Services had received consultation responses from Abba Cars Limited, the Rayleigh Civic Society, Rayleigh Town Council and the Unit Commander of the Rayleigh Policing Unit. The Chairman had so far received twenty-one responses from residents.

During general debate of possibilities, reference was made to the following:-

- The Increased usage which may be made of London Road if traffic flows were improved.

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- The problems which could be experienced at Bellingham Lane when there was increased activity at the Mill Hall.
- The possible advantages of a slip road facility to Hockley.
- The advantages and disadvantages of introducing a mini-roundabout at the Websters Way car park exit, combined with a facility to turn right.
- The issues associated with traffic using areas of Rayleigh as 'rat-runs'.
- The possibility that the introduction of railings between the traffic lights at Crown Hill could assist the flow of pedestrians.

A Member observed that many of the comments in the submissions from Abba Cars Limited highlighted salient issues.

There was general consensus that it would be appropriate to ask the County to consider the possibilities for widening the road at the top of the High Street combined with bringing the location of the traffic lights further back (Note: Councillor T Livings wished it to be recorded that he was not in favour of this option).

Responding to Member questions, officers advised that:-

- Traffic flows had been included in the recent traffic study undertaken by Mouchel. It would be unfair to compare the operation of the network now with that in existence three to four years ago as traffic flows have increased in the interim.
- Given associated costings and timescales, it would now be appropriate to focus on the potential of a specific scheme (rather than a range of options).
- There are traffic flow/infrastructure issues across the whole of South Essex which are, unfortunately, beyond the remit of the Sub-Committee.
- The County is currently looking at residential zones where a package of measures could be introduced to improve road safety, including speed limit reductions to 20 miles per hour. It is hoped a pilot scheme will be introduced this financial year, and the Glasseys Lane area of Rayleigh is included in the rolling programme.

Members recognised that it was not possible to identify which vehicle users were visiting Rayleigh as a shopping destination and which were only travelling through. It was observed that, whilst the Sub-Committee's objective was to consider options for improvement in traffic flow, the status quo should not be discounted as an option.

Referring to the forthcoming visit to the town centre by County Councillor R Bass, the County Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transportation, a Member referred to the value of this being arranged to co-incide with a time when the town was at its most vibrant.

In terms of the way forward, Members concurred with the Chairman that it would be appropriate to indicate to the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee that the Sub-Committee needed more time to facilitate consideration of all consultation responses and to formulate final recommendations to improve traffic flow. The Head of Planning Services confirmed that he would compile a briefing paper on the outcome of consultation and arrange for Members of the Sub-Committee to receive copies of all responses received.

At the conclusion of discussions, the Sub-Committee agreed that, in advance of the next meeting, the District Manager should identify the cost of undertaking further study related to widening the road at the top of the High Street combined with bringing the location of the traffic lights further back. The objective of the proposal would be to improve traffic flow to Hockley and along Websters Way; assist emergency vehicles; improve the situation at Crown Hill; provide for a filter lane to encourage the use of London Hill and assist car parking issues in the Mill Hall area.

12 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Sub-Committee should be scheduled for Wednesday, 30 July 2003, commencing at 10.00am in Committee Room 4, Civic Suite, Rayleigh.

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and closed at 11.54am.

Chairman

Date