

## NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE HIGHWAYS PARTNERSHIP – JOINT MEMBER PANEL

Meeting held at the Council Offices, Gernon Road, Letchworth Garden City  
at 7.30 p.m. on Monday, 16 October 2006

### MINUTES

**PRESENT:** **Representing North Hertfordshire District Council:**  
Councillors: A. Ashley, P.C.W. Burt, J. Cunningham, Mrs F. Hill,  
M. Kirkland and D. Proudlove.

**In Attendance:** Committee & Member Services Officer.

**PRESENT:** **Representing Hertfordshire County Council:**  
County Councillors: D. Drake (Chairman), Dr. N. Agar, D.A. Ashley, D. Billing,  
N. Brook, A.F. Hunter and R.A.C. Thake.

*Note: County Councillor Dr. N. Agar left the meeting at 9.36 p.m.*

**In Attendance:** North Herts District Manager – Hertfordshire Highways.  
North Herts Lead Assistant District Manager – Hertfordshire Highways  
Strategy Development Manager – Hertfordshire Highways

**15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been received from District Councillors Lorna Kercher and A.D. Young and County Councillors K.F. Emsall and M.R.M. Muir.

**16. SUBSTITUTION**

There were no substitutions made at this meeting.

**17. MINUTES – 26 JUNE 2006**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2006 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

**18. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no notification of other business.

**19. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

No declarations of interest had been made.

**20. RECEIPT OF PETITIONS SINCE THE LAST MEETING OF THE JOINT MEMBER PANEL**

The North Herts District Manager confirmed that no petitions had been received for presentation to the Committee.

**21. ITEMS REFERRED FROM NHDC AREA COMMITTEES**

The North Herts District Manager advised that three items had been referred to the Joint Member Panel since its last meeting held on 26 June 2006.

- 1. Letchworth Area Committee – 2 October 2006**
- 2. Royston and District Committee – 4 October 2006**
- 3. Southern Rural Area Committee – 5 October 2006**

The North Herts District Manager regretted that he had been unable to provide any response to either the NHDC Area Committees or the Joint Member Panel due to the non - appointment of a liaison officer by NHDC who would work closely with himself on the costs and advice on schemes for presentation to the five Area Committees.

Led by the Chairman there was a robust debate about the absence of an NHDC liaison officer who would interact closely with the North Herts District Manager in order to provide cost estimates for projects and schemes previously identified by the NHDC Area Committees.

The NHDC Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport offered his apologies for the delay in providing a liaison officer following the retirement of the NHDC Chief Engineer and confirmed that he would be meeting soon with Heads of Service at NHDC in order to resolve this issue.

Notwithstanding the remarks made from the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport it was made abundantly clear by the JMP that this situation was untenable and had to be resolved as a matter of urgency. The North Herts District Manager advised the JMP that the current non – appointment of a liaison officer between NHDC and North Hertfordshire Highways would have an effect on the disbursement of remaining funds in the JMP Discretionary Budget (Agenda Item 11)

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the Joint Member Panel expressed their deep concern at the lack of appointment of an NHDC/JMP liaison officer by North Herts District Council and requested immediate action by the NHDC Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport to resolve this omission;
- (2) That the NHDC Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport be requested as a matter of urgency to enter into discussions with the appropriate Directors and Heads of Service at North Herts District Council concerning the appointment of an NHDC/NHHP – JMP liaison officer.

**22. OBJECTIONS TO PROPOSED TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER, DEARDS WOOD , KNEBWORTH**

The North Herts District Manager (NHDM) advised the JMP that, at appeal, planning permission had been granted for five dwellings at Deards Wood subject *inter alia* to a highway condition i.e. 'no development shall take place until the necessary arrangements to the TRO relating to parking restrictions in Park Lane has been obtained and all the improvement works to visibility at the junction of Deards Wood and Park Lane have been carried out, all in accord with the details shown on Drawing No. 4022/3C'.

The NHDM confirmed that the TRO was for an extension of waiting restrictions along Park Lane on either side of the junction with Deards Wood. The NHDM explained that the visibility was very sub standard in the context of the volume of traffic using this junction. Also, there was a large number of vehicles parked in this area during the day and that the majority of the parked vehicles probably belonged to commuters using Knebworth Station.

The JMP noted that consultation had been wide ranging, to local residents, Police, Fire and Rescue, NHDC and other bodies. Whilst it was understood that an extension of waiting restrictions could displace commuters to other areas it was essential that the visibility at the new development was improved for good traffic management and on Health and Safety grounds.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the North Herts District Manger be requested to make the necessary arrangements for the implementation of the Traffic Regulation Order as detailed in the Inspector's report: Ref. APP/X1925/A/04/1161841 and as shown on Drawing 4022/3c for the extension of parking restrictions at Deards Wood/Park Lane, Knebworth;
- (2) That the North Herts District Manager be requested to write to all objectors with advice of the decision to implement this Traffic Regulation Order.

## **REASON FOR DECISION**

To allow the JMP agree and confirm the decision to implement a Traffic Regulation Order at Deards Wood/Park Lane, Knebworth.

### **23. RADBURN WAY, LETCHWORTH - UPDATE**

The Hertfordshire Highways Strategy Development Manager (SDM) reminded the JMP that all schemes listed in the Integrated Works Programme had to undergo a risk assessment and consequently any works undertaken in Radburn Way were subject to a risk assessment prior to the approval and commencement of any works.

Unfortunately even though Baldock Bypass had opened, the non – completion of other works at the Letchworth Gate interchange meant that the after study could not commence and the NHDM advised that it would be unwise to undertake the traffic survey in Radburn Way until all works were complete and the effect of the new south facing slip road and the signal controlled north slip road could be assessed.

The District Council Member for Letchworth South West was reluctant to accept that Radburn Way should be categorised as a high risk and that delays in development of a traffic management scheme should be linked to the completion of works at Letchworth Gate interchange. The problem of this route being a rat run would not in his opinion disappear with the completion of all Baldock Bypass works.

The SDM advised the JMP that the risk team had strongly recommended that any scheme in Radburn Way should be held back in order to undertake a review 12 months after the Baldock Bypass after study. This review would include all traffic flows data in Radburn Way and be compared to the April 2005 survey data. The SDM advised the JMP that any survey undertaken before the completion of all works would unfortunately be invalid.

The JMP noted and understood the comments made by the District Councillor for Letchworth South West, but having taken into consideration the views of the Risk Team it was agreed by the JMP that it would be appropriate to wait for results of the after study, review Radburn Way, and then compare to the results of April 2005 in order to make the correct decision on traffic management.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the information provided on the deferral of Radburn Way investigations by the Risk Team be noted;
- (2) That the Strategy Development Manager be requested to move this scheme from the Integrated Works Programme for 2006/2007 to 2007/2008 to allow the completion of the 12 month study period following completion of the Baldock Bypass.

## **REASON FOR DECISIONS**

To allow the Joint Member Panel confirm the delay of this scheme to allow further risk assessment.

### **24. INTEGRATED WORKS PROGRAMME 2007/2008 AND FORWARD PROGRAMME 2008/2012**

The North Herts Lead Assistant District Manager (NHLM) advised the JMP that the programme for maintenance and improvement schemes on the County's highways was presented for North Hertfordshire in two parts i.e. Integrated Works Programme for 2007/2008 and the Forward Works Programme for 2008/2012 (Appendix A Parts 1 - 4).

The JMP reviewed the information provided in Appendix A and noted that the schemes listed for the IWP in 2007/2008 were at the first draft stage and the NHLM requested that Members should contact him with additions and/or deletions.

Members made various comments about schemes in their own wards and particular reference was made to schemes listed in the IWP that were in better condition than

some roads not named e.g. the Westmill Estate in Hitchin. Members also raised the lack of correlation between schemes in the IWP and the Highways Extra Programme as well as examples of duplication of schemes.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the information provided in the first draft schedule of sites included in the Integrated Works programme for 2007/2008 and the Forward Programme for 2008/2009 to 2011/2012 be noted;
- (2) That the North Herts District Manager be requested to proceed with the appropriate measures to enhance the first draft of the IWP for 2007/2008;
- (3) That Westmill Road and John Barker Place, Hitchin be considered for inclusion in the 2007/2008 LREMP (Highways Extra) programme within the carriageway surfacing category;
- (4) That the North Herts District Manager be requested to provide the JMP with details of the criteria used for the correlation of sites between the information provided in the IWP and the LREMP (Highways Extra) programmes.

**REASON FOR DECISIONS**

To allow the Joint Member Panel be regularly updated of the programme of works in North Hertfordshire and provide the opportunity to contribute to the developing programme.

**25. LOCAL ROAD ENHANCED MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME (HIGHWAYS EXTRA) (2006/07) – PROGRESS REPORT**

The North Herts Lead Assistant District Manager (NHLM) advised the JMP that the past 12 months had been very successful (2006-2007) to date which fully justified the establishment of the Highways Extra Programme. The NHLM was pleased to confirm that all the carriageway resurfacing sites identified at the meeting of the JMP on 26 June 2006 (Minute 11 refers) had been included in the Phase 2 programme with firm delivery dates.

The JMP was pleased to note that some sites currently placed on the reserve list from Phase 1 might be moved to the primary list following savings to date.

The JMP reviewed the sites within North Herts for 2006/2007 as presented at Appendix 1 -2 and the Chairman proposed with unanimous support that a vote of thanks be recorded in respect of the excellent progress and results of the Highways Extra Programme.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the information provided on the feedback on the finalised schedule of sites in Phase 2 of the Highways Extra programme be noted;
- (2) That the progress to date with the delivery of the Highways Extra programme overall and specifically within North Hertfordshire be noted;
- (3) That a vote of thanks be recorded to officers in respect of the excellent achievements and progress to date with the delivery of the Highways Extra programme overall and specifically within North Hertfordshire.

**26. JOINT MEMBER PANEL DISCRETIONARY BUDGET 2006 - 2007**

The North Herts District Manager (NHDM) provided an update on the approved projects for 2006/2007: Vehicle Activated Signs Rota, Enhanced Maintenance of Town Centres, Improved Lighting at The Green – Codicote, Street Signing Review in Letchworth Garden City, Traffic calming near Oughtonhead Primary School – Hitchin, Additional Street Lighting at Bury Plantation Footpath – Royston, VAS in Wymondley Road – Hitchin, VAS in Willian Village. The JMP welcomed the progress and the NHDM confirmed that prudence had been wise in the commitment

to and completion of works as HHC Cabinet had vetoed any carry forward of funds from the previous financial year.

The NHDM invited comments on the expenditure proposed for treatment of grass verges subject to repeated damage as identified in the table within Paragraph 3.2 a). The JMP were reminded that as there had been no cost estimates for schemes and projects identified by the Area Committees it was not feasible to 'ring fence' resource in the anticipation of such costs being provided. Resource available in the JMP Discretionary Budget must be spent before the end of the current financial year or lost. The JMP were reluctant to lose potential funding for schemes identified but not designed or costed and after a short debate the Chairman proposed and it was agreed that the remaining funds should be allocated to works on verge repairs. The schemes approved were those marked with an asterisk and detailed at 6. (a) to (g) below. The JMP, after another short debate agreed that the remaining resource of £21,150 should be made available to hard surfacing in Stake Piece Road, Royston.

The NHDM confirmed that due to a much smaller demand on design fee activities for schemes and projects than expected there remained a considerable resource available. The NHDM reminded the JMP that this resource could not be carried forward to 2007/2008. The District Councillor for Hitchin Priory Ward proposed to the JMP that a possible use of this resource could be an assessment of a safety scheme allowing the residents of the Cheshire Home at Lavender Fields, Lucas Lane, Hitchin to have a safe access via West Hill/Old Park Road/Paynes Park to Hitchin Town Centre. The Chairman and Members agreed that this proposal had merit and requested that the NHDM to take the appropriate action.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the information provided on the 2006-2007 schemes and works as presented at paragraph 3.1 to the report be noted;
- (2) That the information provided on the identified schemes and works in 2006-2007 as presented at paragraph 3.2 to the report be noted;
- (3) That the information provided on further schemes and works in 2006-2007 as presented at paragraph 3.3 to the report be noted;
- (4) That the sum of £5000 be allocated from the JMP Discretionary Budget for 2006/2007 in order to remove unnecessary signage and signage poles in Letchworth Garden City with specific concentration on the A505 at Letchworth Gate;
- (5) That the sum of £5,733 granted from the Royston Committee Discretionary Budget 2006/2007 be utilised to allow the installation of a vehicle activated sign on the A10 London Road – Royston;
- (6) That the sum of £15,300 be allocated for the provision of treatment works for verge areas subject to repeated damage as follows:

(a)	Baldock: The Leys, near St. Marys Way	Wooden bollards	£3,000
(b)	Hitchin: Whitehill Road	Wooden bollards	£2,000
(c)	Ickleford: St. Katherines Close	Wooden bollards	£2,000
(d)	Letchworth: Bursland, near shop	Wooden bollards	£3,200
(e)	Letchworth: Highfield at junction with West View	Wooden bollards	£700

(f)	Letchworth: Orchard Way	Bird beak fencing	£3,700
(g)	Hitchin : Old Hale Way and Strathmore Avenue	Wooden bollards, Kerbs	£1,000

- (7) That the remaining balance of £21,150 in the JMP Discretionary Budget for 2006/2007 be allocated towards the costs (estimate of £22, 400) of providing hard surfacing in Stake Piece Road, Royston;
- (8) That the balance of funding available for design fees be awarded to the costs associated with the design of appropriate and safe access by individuals with disabilities from the Cheshire Home at Lavender Fields, Lucas Lane via West Hill to Hitchin Town Centre;
- (9) That pending the appointment of the NHDC/NHHP JMP liaison officer no consideration would be given to the current or potential applications for matched funding from the JMP Discretionary Budget 2006/2007 by the five NHDC Area Committees.

**REASON FOR DECISIONS:**

To ensure that the Joint Member Panel are aware of the current status of schemes and agreed themes for the JMP Discretionary Budget.

**27. OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

The JMP were pleased to note the consistent and excellent results concerning Potholes, Hazardous pavements, Exposed wiring in street lighting units and customer reported street lighting faults as per the results detailed in Appendices A, B and C.

The JMP noted that the number of listed pedestrian crossings with facilities for the disabled had decreased due to the change in criteria for this Performance Indicator BV 165 with the removal of Zebra Crossings.

**RESOLVED:** That the data supplied on the Operational Performance Indicators for the inclusive period March 2006 to August 2006 be noted.

**REASON FOR DECISION:**

To ensure that the JMP are regularly updated on the performance on key service activities.

The meeting closed at 9.47 p.m.

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Chairman