

The **WARWICK AREA COMMITTEE** met at **WARWICK** on the **11<sup>th</sup> MARCH, 2008**.

Present:-

Councillor Sarah Boad (Chair)  
“ Marion Haywood (Vice Chair)  
“ Ken Browne  
“ Alan Cockburn  
“ Jose Compton  
“ Chris Davis  
“ Michael Doody  
“ Eithne Goode  
“ Tim Naylor  
“ Raj Randev  
“ Dave Shilton  
“ John Whitehouse

Also Present:-

Officers: Shirley Reynolds and Martin Stott (Environment and Economy Directorate), Tim Healey, Tony Maione and Jenny Murray (Performance and Development Directorate), Phil Astle (Children, Young People and Families Directorate)

The Chair welcomed Jenny Murray to her first meeting of the Committee since taking up her appointment as Warwick Area Manager.

**1. General**  
**(1) Apologies**

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors Les Caborn, Bernard Kirton and Mota Singh.

**(2) Members' Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**

The following Councillors disclosed the following interests:-

Councillor Jose Compton – agenda item 13 – personal – County Council representative on the Warwick District Council for Voluntary Service.

Councillor John Whitehouse – (a) agenda item 3 – personal – County Council Governor for St. Johns' Primary School; (b) agenda item 5 – personal – member of Sustrans.

## 2. Public Question Time

### (1) Warwickshire County Council Cycle Route Designs – cyclists' concerns

#### The Committee received the following briefing note from Rodney King, Cycleways:-

“Since the introduction of the LTP in 2000, important cycle routes have been provided in Emscote Rd and the Parade-Bath Street. Both cases incorporate intimidating features that are not at all cycle friendly, some are described as dangerous by cyclists. On examining them in more detail, one cause of the problem is because the recommendations of the Dept for Transport are not followed by WCC.

“Likewise, the earlier proposals for the Warwick Town Centre traffic management, (the Jacobs Study), were rejected by a wide range of local groups, and a major reason was the inadequate provision for cycling. Again we find a similar problem in the current design consultation for the Portobello Bridge.

“For cyclists, particularly newcomers to cycling, sub standard facilities can be a significant deterrent, as the LTP notes, .....*the major deterrent to increased cycle use among both existing and potential users was the perception of danger and the lack of cycle-friendly infrastructure,*

“The overall objectives of the Cycling Strategy in the LTP are very clear:

- *To encourage more people to cycle instead of using cars for short journeys*
- *To develop safe, convenient and attractive cycle route networks*
- *To address real and perceived concerns regarding cycle safety*

“Cyclists' concerns are very real, and without working to the national standards set by the DfT it is difficult to see how the objectives of the LTP can be met.

“Recommendations for a way forward:

- Request Transport Planning and Design Services to adopt DfT standards, or better. In locations where these standards cannot be met, this should be noted on the scheme agenda papers.
- Improve department performance by investing in a programme of staff training and professional development on the design of cycle friendly infrastructure.
- Review the existing Emscote Rd cycle lanes with a view to meeting standards, where possible.”

**Comments by representatives of Cycleways**

- (i) Cycling was her preferred mode of transport and she regularly cycled from Leamington Spa to Warwick. She had been pleased at the County Council's decision to prioritise cycling but she did not consider that the County Council received value for money. She would speak specifically about the Emscote Road cycleway but her comments could also relate to other cycleways. The chief defects of the cycleway were as follows. The lane was variable in width and in places so narrow that it did not allow for the inevitable wobble that occurred in stopping and starting, particularly in traffic. It was impossible to miss the drains and remain in the cycle lane. The surface finish was so poor that it was left rough and bumpy and she had nearly been unseated when her wheel hit a bump. In places it was very ill drained and became flooded during heavy rain. Because cyclists would expect to be safer using an official cycleway, a poorly made cycleway was more dangerous in many ways than having no cycleway.
- (ii) He concurred with the last point made and pointed out that the guidance was that preferably cycle lanes should be 2 metres wide but if this were not possible they should be at least 1.5 metres. The County Council had adopted substandard criteria. It was difficult to get the Directorate to listen and do something to tackle the problem.
- (iii) County Council officers had a very poor understanding of cyclists' needs. The County Council should invest in people by training them so that they could fully appreciate the problems. There were various organisations that would be prepared to assist with the training.

Councillor Eithne Goode was very concerned that the County Council were providing cycle lanes that were below the recommended minimum width. If there were a lack of expertise in the Directorate concerning cycling issues, the offer of assistance in training staff should be accepted. The County Council were in the process of bidding for finance for cycle lanes but it would be wasteful to spend any money received on providing more cycle lanes that were inadequate. This was a countywide issue and she understood that Councillor Ken Browne, in his capacity as Chair of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, was willing to put this on the agenda for that Committee.

Councillor Dave Shilton sympathised with the views expressed but on practical grounds Emscote Road was too narrow in places to enable the provision of 1.5 metre minimum cycle lanes on both sides and leave sufficient space on the rest of the carriageway for two-way traffic. He recalled that the state of the Emscote Road cycleways had been raised at a meeting of the Warwick Area Committee a year earlier and he was surprised that nothing had been done. He added that officers should go out and look at the condition of the cycle lane the following day.

Councillor Jose Compton said that Emscote Road had always been a marginal case for a cycleway. The footpath was too narrow for shared pedestrian/cyclist

usage. She referred to two cycleways in her Division that were well used. She was not keen on officers being attacked in public.

Councillor Ken Browne said that there was an issue if cycle routes were not meeting DfT minimum standards. The LTP thrust was to discourage the use of the motor car in favour of cycling. He therefore confirmed that he would ensure that an item appeared in the work plan for the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee. At one time he had been the portfolio holder responsible for that area of work and he had believed that the issues had been sorted out some time ago. He did not see the comments from the cycleways representative as being an attack on officers rather as an offer of help to overcome a lack of experience. It was an organisational fault that the necessary expertise was not available.

Martin Stott said that the representatives from Cycleways had put forward very powerful arguments and he would ensure that a report went to Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee. He would also look at improving the resources in the Directorate for cycling expertise. The County Council would be putting in a bid for match funding from the Government's ten Cycle Towns initiative. The Government were due shortly to issue new design standards and once these were published County Council policy on cycleways would be aligned with the new national standards. He would ask that a review of the Emscote Road cycleway provision be taken into account when the feasibility study on extending the cycleway to Leamington Spa.

It was then Resolved:-

That the Warwick Area Committee agree that a report on the countywide policy on cycleways and any non-compliance issues with national standards be considered by the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee and that the outcome be reported back to the Area Committee.

Councillor Dave Shilton asked that the specific issue of Emscote Road be included in the report to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## **(2) Stoneleigh Road, Blackdown, Speed Limit Review**

### **Councillor L.J. Santa Cassia**

The section of Stoneleigh Road, Blackdown, concerned was that between the A452 and Bericote Road roundabouts. It was a very narrow and twisting road with a bend on the brow of a hill. It was a residential road with street lighting and it was very dangerous for the residents to leave or enter their properties. The opening of the new school in Sandy Lane would exacerbate the problem. There had been a number of accidents requiring helicopter attendance. Recently, there had been one fatal accident and two near fatal accident. There were roads in the vicinity that were restricted to 40 mph or lower. A 50 mph speed limit was still too high and should be reduced to 30 mph.

Councillors Michael Doody and Dave Shilton were fully supportive of a reduction in the speed limit. Councillor Eithne Goode agreed that it was a dangerous stretch of road but also referred to Sandy Lane, which was 60 mph for most of its length and asked if that could also be considered for speed reduction.

It was agreed that the officers should look at the feasibility of reducing the speed limits on the section of Stoneleigh Road, Blackdown between the A452 and Bericote Road roundabouts and the length of Sandy Lane currently subject to a 60 mph speed limit and report back.

**3. Change to the Admission Number of St. John's Primary School, Kenilworth**

The Committee considered the report by the Strategic Director of Children, Young People and Families.

Phil Astle introduced the report.

Councillor Alan Cockburn said that any initial concerns that he had about the proposals had been allayed and he now supported them.

Councillors John Whitehouse and Dave Shilton also supported the proposals.

It was then Resolved:-

That Cabinet be informed that the Warwick Area Committee supports the proposals for the reduction in the admission numbers of St. John's Primary School, Kenilworth.

**4. Change to the Admission Number of Southam Primary School**

The Committee considered the report by the Strategic Director of Children, Young People and Families and it was then Resolved:-

That Cabinet be informed that the Warwick Area Committee supports the proposals for the reduction in the admission numbers of Southam Primary School.

**5. Barford – Sherbourne Cycleway**

The Committee considered the report by the Interim Strategic Director for Environment and Economy.

**Councillor Robert Mulgrue, Barford Joint Parish Council**

He reminded members that a presentation had been made to them two years earlier on the Barford Parish Plan. An update report had been made in March 2007 during which frustration had been expressed at the lack of

progress. Since then discussions had taken place and progress had been made in relation to highway maintenance issues. There had been no progress in relation to the proposal for a 20 mph speed limit but this had been due to conflict with county policy and financial constraints. He then referred to the proposed cycle route and confirmed that Barford wanted the continuous route to Warwick. He pointed out the concern from a colleague from Sherbourne on a matter of detail.

Councillor John Whitehouse asked if the estimates were robust because he would not want increasing costs to impact on the possible implementation of the proposal for a Kenilworth to Leamington cycleway, which was promoted in the LTP.

Martin Stott said that he had no reason to believe that the estimates were not robust. He would, however, ask the officer responsible to respond to Councillor John Whitehouse.

It was then Resolved:-

That the Warwick Area Committee approve the conversion of the eastern footway on the A429 between Barford and Sherbourne, as highlighted on the Plan in Appendix A, to a shared use footway/cycleway.

## **6. Warwick Town Centre Traffic Management Review – Funding Arrangements**

The Committee considered the report by the Interim Strategic Director for Environment and Economy.

Shirley Reynolds introduced the report and added that Councillor Raj Randev had drawn her attention to the fact that the Severn-Trent Tournament Field site had begun to be occupied and she would seek to establish whether Section 106 payments should be forthcoming.

### **James Mackay, Warwick Society**

The Warwick Forum fully supported the set of proposals. What made them particularly attractive was that they were step-by-step proposals that could be implemented as Section 106 monies became available. At a later date they could be complemented, but not replaced, by additional measures.

Councillor Raj Randev asked officers to investigate whether any Section 106 payments were already due.

Councillor John Whitehouse referred to the proposal to allocate £40,000 from the delegated budget to pump-prime the step by step proposals and said that, as the expenditure would at some time be covered by Section 106 payments, the £40,000 be considered as a loan.

**Dennis Cripps, Chair of St. Nicholas Church Street Stakeholders**

He pointed out that St. Nicholas Church Street area had a high level of air pollution and the County Council had a duty to tackle the problem with or without a Section 106 payment. He asked the Committee to give officers authority to spend whatever was necessary to deal with the problem.

Councillor Ken Browne said that the Committee could not sign a blank cheque and any proposals should be brought to the Committee for a decision. He supported making the £40,000 a loan.

It was then Resolved:-

That Warwick Area Committee:-

- (1) Notes the information on the Section 106 agreements relating to the South West Warwick development.
- (2) Allocates £40,000 from its delegated budget, subject to it being repaid once a significant amount of the Section 106 payments had been received, to pump-prime the costs associated with its previous resolution that the rapid implementation of the detailed design stage takes place.
- (3) Approves the proposal for the establishment of a Programme Board to oversee the development of the Forum's proposals, and of a Joint Study Group to examine the possibility of road user charging or gating using traffic.

**7. Capital Programme for Transport 2008-09**

The Committee considered the report by the Interim Strategic Director for Environment and Economy.

**Councillor Robert Mulgrue, Barford Joint Parish Council**

Table 2: Wasperton Lane and Hareway Lane, Barford, were small lanes that were being used by small commercial vehicles to the endangerment of vulnerable users on the lanes. He asked for some officer time to address the issue. There was a problem with parking in Wasperton Lane where council houses had been built fifty years before with no provision for garages. The Parish Plan had suggested that parking should be provided on the wide grass verge but this had not been possible because of public utilities set in the verge. He asked that alternative arrangements should be examined.

Councillor John Whitehouse referred to Table 1, sixteenth item and said that he was happy with the comment relating to the provision of a puffin crossing on

Beehive Hill, Kenilworth. In respect of Table 4, he asked what was meant by “patching/reconstruction” in Randall Road, Kenilworth.

The Chair said that the appropriate officer would be asked to let him have an answer to his question outside the meeting.

Councillor Dave Shilton said that he had serious concerns about the poor state of repair of Randall Road, Kenilworth, as it would be part of the diversionary route for buses when Warwick Road was closed.

Councillor Jose Compton raised a question about Table 6 about whether there was any link between route treatment schemes and speed reduction work. Councillor Ken Browne said that this might be another example of people in different parts of the Directorate not speaking to each other. It might be cheaper if speed restriction work was carried out at the same time as other work.

The Chair asked Martin Stott to make enquiries and to let the whole Committee have an explanation of how it fitted together.

Councillor Ken Browne referred to Table 4 and the fact that Sycamore Grove and Laburnum Grove, Warwick were not adopted and he asked for a legal ruling as to whether the County Council was responsible. He was aware that there had been a case where a housing department had refused to accept responsibility for roads that were not adopted and it had been ruled that this was the responsibility of the county council.

Martin Stott said that the decision must have been made on a case for case basis because generally the County Council would not be responsible for a road unless it had been adopted. He would look into the matter and report back to Councillor Ken Browne.

It was then Resolved:-

That Members:

- (1) Support the Capital Programme for Integrated for Warwick Area given in Table 1.
- (2) Support the Delegated Budget Local Schemes (Minor Improvements) Programme for Warwick Area given in Table 2.
- (3) Support the Delegated Budget Local Schemes (Minor Maintenance) Programme for Warwick Area given in Table 3.
- (4) Agree that the schemes listed in Table 5 be removed from the list of requests.



- (5) Support the Route Treatment Priorities for Warwick Area given in Table 6.
- (6) Support the allocation of £40,000 Delegated Budget funding as a loan to Warwick Town Centre Street by Street Measures design work.

#### **8. Traffic Management Act 2004 – Civil Parking Enforcement**

The Committee considered the report by the Interim Strategic Director for Environment and Economy and it was Resolved:-

- (1) That the proposed fourth variation to the Warwickshire County Council (District of Warwick) (Permitted Parking Area and Special Parking Area) (Waiting Restrictions, On-Street Parking Places and Residents' Parking) (Consolidation) Order be made as advertised to come into effect on 31 March 2008.
- (2) That the Committee approves the making of the Warwick District Council off-Street Parking Places Order 2008.

#### **9. Contribution Towards the Funding of a Migrant Worker Support Post - Social Inclusion Fund – 2008/09**

The Committee considered the report by the Strategic Director of Performance and Development.

Councillor Tim Naylor supported the proposal to continue the financial support for the post but said that it would be inappropriate to do so from the Social Inclusion Fund on a long-term basis and asked officers to seek other funding streams to take over financing the initiative. Tim Healey confirmed that this was already in hand.

Resolved:-

That approval be given to the allocation of £20,000 from the Social Inclusion Fund in 2008/09 towards the cost of the Migrant Worker Support Post.

#### **10. Use of Area Committee Grants Funds 2008-09**

The Committee considered the report by the Strategic Director of Performance and Development and it was Resolved:-

That the Warwick Area Committee note the report and inform Cabinet that they endorse the views of their funding sub-group as set out section 3 of the report.

## **11. Provisional Items for Future Meetings**

The Committee noted the following provisional items:-

6<sup>th</sup> May 2008

- Woodloes Primary Schools – to consider comments as part of the consultation on future proposals for the Woodloes schools.
- Area Community Learning Partnership for Warwick District, progress report 2007/08 and action plan 2008/09.
- Lillington Primary School – to consider comments as part of the consultation on future proposals for the school.
- Proposal for a Public Service Centre in Kenilworth – update.
- Highways Maintenance Plan 2008/09 and Five-Year List of Structural Maintenance Schemes.
- Civil Enforcement and Parking – Warwick District Council (report will deal with any objections to proposals for various changes to on-street parking arrangements in Warwick, Leamington Spa and Kenilworth).
- Speed Limit Review – to present speed limit review recommendations as speed limit review seminar.

## **12. Minutes of the meetings of 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2008 and matters arising**

### **(1) Minutes**

Resolved:-

That the minutes of the meeting of the Warwick Area Committee held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2008, having been circulated, be approved – with the correction to the spelling of Mr. Beddow's name in minute 3(3) – and be signed by the Chair.

### **(2) Matters arising**

#### **(i) Minute 3(4) – Paradise Street, Warwick – blue badge parking space**

Martin Stott said that the disabled Paradise Street resident referred to in the minutes had now obtained a new blue badge. In accordance with the agreement reached at the last meeting, it was Resolved:-

That the blue badge parking space provided prior to decriminalisation in Paradise Street, Warwick, be now reinstated in light of the resident concerned having obtained a new blue badge.

**(ii) Minute 3(7) – Advertisement of Variation Orders**

In response to a question from Councillor Jose Compton, it was confirmed that the variation orders were being advertised as planned.

**(iii) Minute 7 – Woodloes Infant School, Woodloes Junior School and Ridgeway School, Warwick**

Phil Astle said that Cabinet had agreed to formal consultation on the proposals proceeding. There had been a number of meetings already and a meeting had been arranged with parents for the following evening. Responses to the consultation exercise would be reported to the May meetings of Warwick Area Committee and Cabinet. The intention was to amalgamate Woodloes Infant and Junior Schools in an extended and refurbished junior school building and to relocate Ridgeway School in a new building on the Woodloes School site. There was a funding fallback position should Ridgeway School not be relocated.

Councillor Ken Browne said that there was a meeting with the Head of Ridgeway School on the Friday to allay any concerns that she might have.

**13. Any other items**

**Well-Being Fund 2007/8 – Funding Proposals**

The Committee considered the report by the Strategic Director of Performance and Development.

**(1) Introduction**

This paragraph was noted.

**(2) Funding Proposals**

**(i) CVS/WREP – Joint Working Initiative**

Resolved:-

That approval be given to grants of £1,500 to Warwickshire Race Equality Partnership and £2,500 to CVS Warwick District for a joint working initiative to develop improved joint working between the two organisations and provide enhanced support to local BME organisations.

**(ii) Community Leaders Course – Sydni Centre**

Resolved:-

That approval be given to a grant of £3,000 to the Sydni Centre to complement a £17,000 Awards for All Grant (if the bid was successful) to provide a community leadership programme based on the Centre.

**(iii) Brunswick Gets Physical**

Resolved:-

That approval be given to a grant of £4,680 to Brunswick Healthy Living Centre as a contribution to the Brunswick Gets Physical Initiative.

.....  
Chair of Committee

The Committee rose at 8.00 p.m.