

SEFTON AREA PARTNERSHIP OF LOCAL Councils
Aintree Village-Formby-Hightown-Ince Blundell-Little Altcar
Lydiate-Maghull-Melling-Sefton-Thornton

Minutes of the Meeting of the Area Partnership held on Thursday 1st December, 2016 at Maghull Town Hall

PRESENT:

Cllrs G.Lee (Chair, Melling), M.Coles (Formby), K.Brennan (Hightown), J.Bailey (Lydiate), J.Desmond (Maghull), R.Baker (Melling), J.Duffy (Clerk, Sefton), M.Duffy (Sefton), C.Jones (Sefton), G.Pennington (Thornton), D.Miles (Thornton), P.O'Hanlon (Park Ward Councillor), Her Honour J.Daley (Observer, Sefton), Sara Moreton (Highways England), Mike Pinder (Highways England), Carl Stockton (Highways England)

APOLOGIES:

Cllrs S.Gent (Aintree Village), A.Ibbs (Little Altcar), M.Byrne (Maghull)

1. GUEST SPEAKERS

Proposed Port of Liverpool Access Route

1.1 Overview

Mike Pinder - Atkins

Mike Pinder thanked the group for the invite and said that he welcomed the opportunity to be able to provide an update on this scheme. He explained that the scheme announced in 2008 included a project of work to improve access to the Port of Liverpool; given it is heavily congested at peak times resulting in increased journey times, and also has a high accident rate. In 2014 a Feasibility Study was undertaken, and 2 possible Options were suggested as a result of this. Namely, a) Improve the A5036 and b) Introduction of a road through Rimrose Valley.

Economic assessments have since been completed, and costings, air quality and noise pollution looked into. An environment/ecological assessment will be completed in January 2017, prior to the Consultation exercise taking place. A report will then be submitted to the Secretary of State in Spring 2017 detailing the Preferred Option, which will then go to the Planning Inspector.

Notably the Bypass Option will require a Development Consent Order (DCO) and improvements to the A5036 Dunning's Bridge Road/Princess Way will necessitate Compulsory Purchase Orders. Construction of the preferred route is expected to take 2 years, but the earliest work is likely to start will be 2020.

Sara Moreton – Highways England

Sara Moreton explained that the Consultation exercise scheduled for the end of January 2017 will consist of a series of Public Information Exhibitions held at 5 locations at different times/dates. Anyone who lives adjacent to the Rimrose Valley and the current road will be invited to these sessions. Those directly affected will receive a further letter, and Sara is willing to meet with these residents directly.

These sessions will also be advertised in THE CHAMPION newspaper, which will be delivered to Sefton Village on this occasion.

It is normally the case that Highways England would just promote the preferred route. However, on this occasion they are putting forward both options for Consultation as they are keen to hear residents' views and suggestions.

Carl Stockton – Highways England

Carl Stockton outlined the route that the proposed Bypass option through Rimrose Valley would take. Namely a 4 lane dual carriageway from Switch Island (Brooms Cross Road), a roundabout in place of the currently signalised junction at Brickwall Lane, passing Edge Lane/Lydiate Lane in Thornton, then through the existing Rimrose Valley Park, coming out onto Princess Way in Seaforth adjacent to the railway bridges.

Highways England are planning to use landscape mounds to shield houses from the road, and are also looking into other noise reduction measures to reduce the impact of the road.

1.2 Comments/Questions

- a) Representatives of Sefton Parish Council voiced concerns including,
- Removal of the historic wall on Brickwall Lane
 - Disturbance of the water table and potential flooding resulting from this
 - The current ineffective noise reduction measures on Brooms Cross Road
- b) Will the residents of Sefton and Lunt Villages be consulted directly by letter?
- *No. Highways England do not have the resources to deliver the letters. Carl Stockton stated this was not due to the cost of producing and delivering the letters, but because they considered it to be an ineffective means of Consultation. They will however receive information about the Consultation exercise.*

Johnny Duffy, Clerk to Sefton Parish Council stated that he believed it to be a dereliction of duty for Highways England not to consult residents of Sefton and Lunt Villages by letter when they will be grossly impacted upon by the proposed new road. In doing so, he added that Highways England could be subject to a Judicial Review for failing to consult fully with residents who would be directly affected by this development. Carl Stockton and Sara Moreton were provided with a map of the area to take away, which clearly detailed the proximity of the Rimrose Valley option and the Brickwall Lane junction, and those residential areas which would be directly affected by the new road, including Sefton and Lunt Villages. The affected area was clearly circled, yet despite extensive explanation by Johnny Duffy, Carl Stockton and Sara Moreton failed to accept that these Villages would be directly affected, and remained adamant that these residents would not be receiving letters. Carl Stockton stated that Highways England were not subject to statutory obligations since they have their own policies and procedures.

- c) Her Honour Judith Daley expressed concerns over the extremely detrimental effect that the Brooms Cross Road has had on Sefton Village so far, and added that she felt so strongly about this that she felt compelled to do a presentation to SMBC about this. In view of this she raised concerns about where the c.3000 extra cars would go that are predicted will result from the new homes being built in Maghull? Similar concerns were also voiced about increased traffic volumes and congestion in the Thornton/Crosby/Ince Woods and Litherland areas as a result of HGVs and cars trying to beat traffic by diverting from the Brooms Cross Road route.
- d) Who do you envisage as being the main users of this new road?
- *HGVs are anticipated to be the main users of this road. In view of this the Chair suggested that Highways England liaise directly with affected Parishes about possible introduction of weight restrictions where needed, i.e. Brickwall Lane.*
- e) Mike Pinder of Atkins stated there is a definite need to reduce congestion along the existing route first. The initial idea to focus on 4 key junctions along the route; namely at *Hawthorne Road, Netherton Way, Park Lane and Copy Lane* has now been scrapped due to cost, and there will be no grading separation of junctions. This will significantly reduce the construction period, which is now expected to take 12-18 months. Project costs will therefore be reduced since utilising the existing road will be significantly cheaper, the underpasses/bridges that were previously included have been removed, and there will be no compulsory purchases. Mike added that the Bypass would offer greater benefits, and that journey times would be reduced due to not having to stop and start at junctions. Provision of another lane at Copy Lane is being considered to reduce waiting times.
- f) On what basis is the Highways England model being developed? Does it take into account the Peel development and development of the City Region? Also, the Brooms Cross Road is clearly not working.
- *Carl Stockton was keen to stress that SMBC undertook the survey work for the Brooms Cross Road and not Highways England. Traffic counts and surveys have been conducted at peak times since the opening of Brooms Cross Road, and a Base Model has been produced to show the existing behaviour of drivers. Highways England have worked with Peel to try and forecast future traffic growth figures as a result of vehicles using the Port and transfer of freight to other methods of transportation. They have forecasted a major increase of HGVs using Dunning's Bridge Road, and have produced a 25 year advance prediction detailing 3 levels of growth – Core, Low and High. The existing Dunning's Bridge Road simply won't cope, so doing nothing is not an option.*
- g) What discussions are ongoing with Peel and the City Region?
- *The Port Steering Group was mentioned. This consists of Key Players from organisations including SMBC, Peel and Merseytravel. The use of improvements to local rail infrastructure is also being looked at alongside Highways Improvement Schemes.*

- h) Monitoring equipment has been attached to lamp posts in the area to monitor the existing air quality, and to try and help forecast the future impact this Scheme could have on air quality.
- i) Concerns were raised about the possible escape of methane gas, should the Rimrose Valley Bypass option be selected, since there was previously a rubbish dump in that area.
- *Ground investigative works are still being conducted, and it can be confirmed this land is still gassy. The road would however be built on piles, which would act as a supportive structure.*
- j) Has the movement of freight from the Port along the Manchester Ship Canal being accounted for when forecasting future road usage figures?
- *Yes. Despite the volumes of freight to be moved not yet being known, Peel have invested in a new Port in Manchester, as well as the £300 million they have committed to investing in the Port access road improvements.*
- k) Why have the East Lancashire Road and Queens Drive not been considered as alternative routes?
- *The A5036 is the most direct route to the Port and Queens Drive is not managed by Highways England.*
- l) Concerns were raised that following completion of the Scheme, the road simply won't have sufficient capacity to displace traffic from other roads.
- m) The need for Highways England to speak to our Communities was raised, and Sara Moreton was keen to add that she emails all Borough Councillors.
- *The Secretary agreed to provide email address for the Parish/Town Clerks, but not for individual members for Data Protection reasons. Johnny Duffy added that the Minutes of the Special Meeting with Highways England held in July 2016 had been shared with other neighbouring affected Parish Councils.*

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (29/09/16)

Cllr Bailey proposed that the Minutes were a true and accurate record of the Meeting and Cllr Desmond seconded this. Those present were in agreement.

3. MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Clerk – Thornton Parish Council

Raised as item 7.7 under 'Area Round Up' on the previous Minutes, it was reported that the Clerk to Thornton Parish Council has not yet resigned.

4. CORRESPONDENCE

- * SMBC Planning Department - 4/10/16, 11/10/16, 18/10/16, 1/11/16, 9/11/16, 15/11/16, 22/11/16 + 30/11/16
- Weekly Planning Lists
- * Johnny Duffy, Clerk Sefton Parish Council - 19/10/16
- Email to Margaret Carney/Sara Moreton/Carl Stockton in response to email received from Fiona Whitfield of The Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester & North Merseyside. Notably Natural England were not approached by Peel or the Port of Liverpool with information provided by the Fiona at the recent Seascapes Conference hosted by the North West Coastal Forum in October 2016. Margaret Carney opened this Conference and spoke about the fate of the Seaforth Nature Reserve in the context of the Port environment. When later questioned by Fiona, Margaret stated that the Marine Lake had been put forward as a mitigation for the loss of the Nature Reserve. SPC have grave concerns about the impact that the construction of an access tunnel could potentially have on Sefton Parish and the nearby rural environment, and feel they are being deliberately ignored.
- * Margaret Carney, Chief Executive SMBC - 19/10/16
- Margaret was keen to stress that she did not say the plans had been brought forward by Peel for the Nature Reserve, but early conversations had taken place about the location of a compensatory habitat for the Seaforth Nature Reserve. Should this be necessary in relation to Peel's plans to improve the rail link in and out of the Port, various potential sites for a compensatory habitat will need to be

explored across the North of England, which will be fully explored and assessed by relevant Authorities including Natural England. One of these potential areas could be Marine Lake. No formal proposal has been received by SMBC, and the Conference did not involve any Consultation on any Port Access route.

- * Cllr David Miles, Thornton Parish Council (Treasurer) - 24/10/16
 - Provided his address for Donation Cheques to be sent to him.
62-64 Ince Road, Thornton, Merseyside, L23 4UF
- * Barbara Weightman, Locum Clerk Aintree Village Parish Council - 27/10/16
 - Provision of new Clerk's details:-
Mrs Meg Dilworth
Aintree Village Parish Council, P.O Box 124, Liverpool, L31 3YX
(07434) 662833 / aintreevillageparishcouncil@hotmail.co.uk
- * Meg Dilworth, Clerk Aintree Village Parish Council - 1/11/16
 - Invite to Aintree Village PC Civic Service: Sunday 20/11/16, 245pm at The Hope Centre
- * Johnny Duffy, Clerk Sefton Parish Council - 7/11/16
 - Electronic receipt requested for Donation Cheque to be posted 8/11/16
- * Aintree Village Parish Council - 8/11/16
 - Meetings 2017: 16/1/17, 20/2/17, 20/3/17, 17/4/17, 15/5/17, 19/6/17, 17/7/17, 21/8/17, 18/9/17, 16/10/17, 20/11/17, 18/12/17
- Barbara Weightman, Lydiat Parish Council - 8/11/16
 - Meetings 2017: Tuesdays 24/1/17, 28/2/17, 28/3/17, 25/4/17, 23/5/17, 27/6/17, 25/7/16, 26/9/17, 24/10/17, 28/11/17
- Claire Jenkins, Clerk Formby Parish Council - 9/11/16
 - Meetings 2017: Tuesdays 3/1/17, 7/2/17, 7/3/17, 4/4/17, 2/5/17, 6/6/17, 4/7/17, 5/9/17, 3/10/17, 7/11/17, 5/12/17
- Cllr R.Baker, Melling Parish Council - 9/11/16
 - Meetings 2017: Tuesdays 10/1/17, 14/2/17, 14/3/17, 11/4/17, 16/5/17, 13/6/17, 11/7/17, 12/9/17, 10/10/17, 14/11/17, 12/12/17
- Cllr J.Desmond, Maghull Town Council - 10/11/16
 - Meetings 2017: Monthly on a Wednesday
- Cllr D.Miles, Thornton Parish Council - 14/11/16
 - Meetings 2017: Monday 9/1/17 only date so far
- * Sara Moreton, Highways England - 8/11/16
 - Confirmation of attendance for herself, Carl Stockton + Mike Pinder for 1/12/16
- * Siobhan Larking, Democratic & Mayoral Officer, Maghull Town Council - 15/11/16
 - Explained she's replaced Pat Annal. siobhan.larking@maghull-tc.gov.uk
- * Barbara Weightman, Clerk Lydiat Parish Council - 16/11/16
 - Confirmation that we can use Lydiat Village Hall for our meeting on 19/1/17
- * Meg Dilworth, Clerk Aintree Village Parish Council - 17/11/16
 - Offered use of their Council Chamber for 19/1/17
- * Cllr George Pennington, Thornton Parish Council - 18/11/16
 - Advising he is now back as a Councillor for Thornton Parish Council
- * Johnny Duffy, Clerk Sefton Parish Council - 21/11/16
 - Agenda SPC Meeting 29/11/16 + email to Park Ward Councillors about their refusal to attend SPC meeting for over a year, which also raises concerns about the impact the Brooms Cross Road is having on the Village
- * Johnny Duffy, Clerk Sefton Parish Council - 22/11/16
 - Email to Margaret Carney thanking her for her response and support of SPC, yet pointing out to her that their last SMBC visitor was Gary Berwick in November 2015
 - Email to Dave Marrin raising Her Honour Judge Daley's concerns & that of the 3 North Ward Councillors:- 1) Traffic speed through Sefton Village, 2) Dangerous Junction at Brickwall Lane/Glebe End+Brickwall Green, 3) Augmentation of HGVs through the Village since the opening of the Brooms Cross Road

- Fwd: Article from Agricultural News, "Flood Warnings in Place, are you affected?"
- * Johnny Duffy, Clerk to Sefton Parish Council - 23/11/16
 - Invite to Chair to attend Fracking lecture to be provided by Professor Worden prior to the SPC Meeting on 29/11/16
- * Cllr Kevin Sharpe, Ince Blundell Parish Council - 30/11/16
 - Advising that West Lancashire Council refused the application made by Coriolis for 12 wind turbines at the meeting of the Planning Committee on 10/11/16. Thanks were expressed to Formby PC, Lydiate PC and Aintree Village PC for their letters of objection.
- * Johnny Duffy, Clerk Sefton Parish Council - 30/11/16
 - Warning was given about Mrs Elaine Murphy, a Netherton resident, who requested SPC's last 2 years accounts and information on how to become a Councillor. The tone of her emails was quite rude, and she also claimed that SPC were deliberately trying to exclude her, yet she failed to attend the SPC meeting on 29/11/16 despite being invited.

5. FUTURE SPEAKERS

- * Anthony Hearn, Senior Community Park Officer (January 2017)
 - New Parks Strategy
- * Fiona Whitfield, Head of Natural England for Merseyside
 - Lunt Meadows
- * Steve Rotheram MP
 - Regional City Mayor Application
- * Professor Worden, Liverpool University Department of Earth Ecological Science
 - Fracking
- * Merseytravel
 - Sefton District Bus Network Review Plan 2016/17
- * BT Outreach
 - Poor Broadband coverage in some member Parishes
- * Andrea Watts, SMBC
 - Area Committee report
- * Ian Maher – Leader of SMBC (*Special Meeting if necessary)

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 Donation Cheques

The Treasurer reported that to-date he'd received Donation Cheques from Aintree Village, Formby, Ince Blundell and Melling Parish Councils, and Maghull Town Council. Therefore 5 Cheques are awaited. The Secretary reminded all present that she no longer deals with anything financial relating to the group, and requested that anything of this nature be sent to the Treasurer Cllr David Miles.

6.2 Fracking

An area to the north east of Melling is to be fracked. Concerns have been raised about potential subsidence, which might result from this. It was suggested that Professor Worden of the Liverpool University Earth Ecological Science department be invited to attend a future group meeting to present on this subject, since he has given similar presentations to other member Councils. As per the group's Constitution, those present were reminded that this group is non-political. Following discussion and guarantee that Professor Worden is non-political and does provide a balanced view on this topic, in the interests of future proofing should a Judicial Review ever arise, it was agreed that he be invited to a future meeting to present on this topic.

6.3 Area Committees

The Chair recently attended a Review Meeting about the current position with the Area Committees. During this meeting a questionnaire was circulated. A further meeting is proposed for January 2017.

The current position with member Councils' Neighbourhood Plans was queried. Formby Parish Council reported that their Plan is nearly ready and is likely to be presented to residents late next year, whereas Melling Parish Council are in the final stages of Referendum and are ready to present their plan to residents, and the Consultant appointed by Lydiate Parish Council is looking at a potential date of Autumn 2017. Thornton Parish Council have not progressed any further with this and Cllr Desmond was not sure of the current progress of Maghull Town Council's Plan as he is not directly involved with it.

The Chair correctly stated that the content of a Neighbourhood Plan can be greatly affected by the content of the Local Plan since the 2 cannot contradict each other. Publication dates for Neighbourhood Plans will also be dependant on the publication date of the Local Plan. Grants are available to assist with the associated costs in producing a Neighbourhood Plan.

6.4 Annual Event

The Secretary requested that the Chair and Vice Chair formulate a purposeful strong Agenda for the Annual Event. In view of the work involved in arranging this Event, the Secretary was keen to stress that we must carefully consider the Agenda and Guest Speakers so that the group is portrayed in a professional light, and we do not appear weak and foolish by just holding the Event for the sake of it.

The following issues were raised,

- i) What do Parish/Town Councils need from an Area Committee?
Cllr Coles made reference to a letter he'd sent to Margaret Carney, Chief Executive of SMBC on this topic 12 months ago, which he was still awaiting a response to.
- ii) Poor relationships between Parish and Ward Councillors
Johnny Duffy, Clerk to Sefton Parish Council, was keen to stress this is not the case with Borough Councillors that represent Sefton Village. He also commented on the sterling work that Parish Councillors do as volunteers, and added that they are more aware of local issues given they are at grassroots level.

6.5 Speed Gun Training

There has been an offer from the Merseyside Police Traffic Division to train Community Volunteers in the use of Speed Guns, with the intent of forming Community Action Groups to target speeding. Cllr Coles suggested that Inspector Jim Atherton might be a possible contact for this – jim.atherton@merseyside.police.uk

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of this group will be held on Thursday 19th January, 2017 at 7.30pm in the Council Chamber at Lydiate Village Centre.