

## SOUTH HAMS HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC ORDERS COMMITTEE

6 November 2020

Present:-

Devon County Council

Councillors J Brazil, R Croad (Chair), R Gilbert, J Hart, J Hawkins, J Hodgson and R Hosking

South Hams District Council

Councillor H Reeve

Devon Association of Local Councils

Councillor L Granados

Apologies:-

Councillors P Smerdon (South Hams District Council).

\* **87**      **Election of Chair**

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hart and **SECONDED** by Councillor Hawkins and

**RESOLVED:** that Councillor Croad be elected Chair for the ensuing year.

\* **88**      **Election of Vice-Chair**

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Croad and **SECONDED** by Councillor Hodgson and

**RESOLVED:** that Councillor Hawkins be elected Vice-Chair for the ensuing year.

\* **89**      **Minutes**

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Croad and **SECONDED** by Councillor Hawkins and

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2019 be signed as a correct record.

\* **90**      **Annual Waiting Restrictions Review**

(An item taken under Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972).

The Chair had decided that the Committee should consider this item as a matter of urgency at the request of Councillor Hodgson, in order to ascertain the current position with the annual review that would normally be presented to the autumn (November) HATOC meeting.

Officers advised that due to the pandemic this had been delayed, but that some action was being considered under delegated powers. Officers would continue to work with local County Councillors and parish councils to progress particular concerns.

Whilst many Members confirmed that the process was working within their divisions, some Members expressed concern at longer delays. Members considered that the normal twelve month annual review process was too lengthy in some cases and there could be merit in returning to a six month review process.

Councillor Hodgson reported that since the start of the pandemic in March 2020, some parts of her division had been particularly affected through inconsiderate parking by some public accessing the river Dart. She was also not aware of progress with other proposals within her division.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Croad and **SECONDED** by Councillor Hawkins and

**RESOLVED:**

(a) that Officers appraise Councillor Hodgson of the current process and progress within her division; and

(b) that Members' comments, that the normal twelve month annual review process was too lengthy in some cases and there could be merit in returning to a six month review process, be noted.

\* **91**      **True Street Cross at A385 to Blackpost Lane, Proposed introduction of a No Right Turn Order**

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste (HIW/20/41) regarding 75 dwellings approved for development by the District Council in 2015. The County Council had raised concerns as a consultee that the proposals would be likely to increase the amount of traffic at True Street Cross, which had substandard visibility in a North East direction (towards Torbay) for drivers exiting the junction onto the A385. Increased manoeuvres may increase traffic problems on the A385.

The scheme proposed no right turn for all traffic exiting on to the A385 and meant that drivers would need to utilise the alternative junction at Blackpost Lane/A385 if they wished to turn right towards Torbay.

Two objections to the advertised Traffic Regulation Order had been received including from Berry Pomeroy Parish Council (summarised in Appendix II of the Report).

The two local County Councillors' comments included:-

- they could not however fully support the Report recommendations as they had concerns at the objections received and effect of a no right turn on a local farm and the farming community;
- the alternative junction at Blackpost lane for use by agricultural vehicles was not appropriate on safety grounds or for local residents of the new housing estate;
- the possibility of a speed reduction and additional signage in the area could be explored for the future;
- a longer term solution of relocating the junction (section 4 of the Report) would have benefits in terms of road safety, capacity and enforcement and should be supported.

In light of Member comments, Officers also drew attention to section 4 of the Report i.e:-

- advising that a no right turn with an exemption for agricultural vehicles was not supported by the County Council's road safety officers due to visibility at the substandard junction; and
- the County Council did not have the funds to progress the investigations or scheme in the region of £100,000-150,000 to relocate the junction.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hodgson and **SECONDED** by Councillor Hawkins and

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the results of the consultation be noted;
- (b) that the implementation of the Traffic Regulation Order as advertised be approved, subject to a right turn option for agricultural vehicles; and
- (c) that consideration be given to a change to the traffic layout with investigation into an additional link route to provide safer access, in due course as funding permits.

\* **92**      **Western Road and Wayside, Ivybridge Proposed amendments to Parking Restrictions and Western Road, Ivybridge Implementation of a Zebra Crossing**

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste (HIW/20/42) regarding the advertised TRO for parking relocation. Western Road was a main arterial route in and out of the town. It currently suffered from congestion with frequent stationary traffic along the length of Western Road and this area was in an Air Quality Management Area. A scheme was proposed to relocate the existing on-street parking on Western Road to help alleviate these problems.

One further representation received from a resident of Western Road on 31 October 2020 had been circulated to Members in advance of the meeting.

The local County Councillor (Chair) commented that the frequent long queues and idling traffic were ongoing issues due to large scale development within the Ivybridge area. He had had extensive communication with Highways England who were not minded to approve a new A38 junction to the eastern side of the town.

Due to the volume of traffic some Members questioned how much effect on congestion and air quality the proposed removal of parking spaces would have. Improvement to the local rail network could be another option in the longer term.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Croad and **SECONDED** by Councillor Hawkins and

**RESOLVED:**

(a) that the results of the consultation be noted;

(b) that the implementation of the Traffic Regulation Order as advertised be approved.

\* **93**      **Ermington Road, Ivybridge/B3213 Junction Improvements**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment (PTE/20/38) regarding a proposed junction improvement where Ermington Road met the B3213, south of the A38 at Ivybridge, by way of a new left turn flared lane. This was a proportional cost effective solution to the existing traffic problem requiring improved access for vehicles joining the A38 westbound, connecting the nearby industrial estate and providing access to Ivybridge to the north.

The local County Councillor commented that this was needed to alleviate queued traffic leading onto the A38. Traffic had increased in recent years due to housing development, accessing popular local businesses and commuting. He would like to see the traffic lane extended if possible.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hosking and **SECONDED** by Councillor Croad and

**RESOLVED:**

(a) that the proposed junction improvements shown on the plans provided in Appendix I of Report PTE/20/38 be approved for construction at an estimated cost of £63,000; and

(b) that the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment be given delegated powers, in consultation with the Chair of HATOC and the local County Councillor, to make minor amendments to the scheme details.

\* **94**     **Fore Street/High Street, Totnes**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste appraising Members of the current situation, summarised as follows:-

In May 2020 the Government published new statutory guidance for highway authorities regarding the urgent need to reallocate road space towards pedestrians, cyclists and 'active travel' in relation to social distancing for the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a part of this initiative Totnes Town Council requested a road closure, covering Fore Street and High Street in the town on Saturday mornings only, between 9am and 1pm for 12 weeks from 20 June to 12 September 2020.

An extension was requested and granted until the 10 October, following the completion of an Impact Assessment. The eastern end of the road closure was moved from the junction with The Plains and Coronation Road to the junction with Station Road, so that the lower end of Fore Street was now excluded.

A further extension was then requested and granted until the 5 December. A key factor in this decision to grant the extension was the rising numbers of COVID-19 cases.

On 2 November the Town Council agreed that the Saturday closures did not need to continue during lockdown and that the situation would be reviewed at the full Town Council meeting on 7 December.

Prior to the formal submission of the request from the Town Council there was some debate in the town regarding the extent of the road closure. Some Councillors had been looking to close the road every morning through the week, but the Chamber of Commerce and STAG (the Sustainable Totnes Action Group) complained that this would have an adverse effect on local businesses. At that time there was a high level of demand for schemes from Town and Parish Councils and Devon County Council made it clear that they could only support measures that had broad community support. In negotiations with the Town Council it was agreed that the Chamber of Commerce and STAG would not object to the proposal if it was only on Saturday mornings and if it was restricted to an initial 12-week period. Both the Chamber of Commerce and STAG have since objected to further closures beyond that period.

Officers had received a large volume of correspondence both in support and against the temporary road closure, with more favouring support.

This proposal was not unique to Totnes, other towns have also put measures in place as a part of the Government initiative.

Comments from the local district councillor Councillor Sweett, had been received on 6 November and were reported verbally, summarised as follows:-

- success meant that streets were very crowded with people enjoying the experience but little social distancing or actual shopping was taking place;

- through the summer visitor season there were many times throughout the week when the town was much quieter and social distancing for the vulnerable was much easier to maintain;

- the reason for these measures until 8 December was questioned as the weather had deteriorated and the tourists gone home;

- shops and market stalls complained that the road closure annihilated early trade, with trade negligible until better weather and the road opened;

- over 40 letters against the road closure and 1 in favour were received by the town council. Whilst car free mornings were pleasant, enjoyable and had a party/festival atmosphere the vast majority of the independent essential type businesses reported substantial losses. Continued road closures through winter was not sustainable and job/income losses must not be a result of a more pleasant visitor experience. Christmas shopping in poor weather was more focused than a summer time social;

- whilst appreciating the town council's desire to seek opinion via a wider survey, it was the town centre shops who were paying overheads;

-shared space initiatives as temporary social distancing measures would reduce cut through traffic thus improving shopping for all at all times;

-Totnes' unique success was due to the varied balance of every day and seasonal tourist shops.

The local County Councillor reported on the large number of representations she had received both for and against the measures and thanked Officers for their support to her and the town council. Her observation of these measures had not indicated that social distancing was more greatly compromised and gave some people more confidence to visit and shop in Totnes when they would not otherwise. The aim of the town council survey was to enable a better informed decision on any extension that may be made, taking into account the needs of the community and working with local businesses.

Members in noting the update, commented that the pandemic had seen a change in how the public shopped, with the experience of shopping and visiting Totnes to be considered alongside the effect of any measures on Totnes businesses and shops whose viability was important.

\* **95**      **County Council 23 July 2020 minute 294 (Notice of Motion - Littlehempston Cycle Path)**

Members noted for information, that further to this Committee's consideration of the matter at its last meeting, the motion subsequently carried at Council in the name of Councillor Hart (after several amendments) was as follows:-

That the Cabinet's advice be accepted as below:-

a) no further work is undertaken on investigating whether the footbridge could be used by the public and the development of a multi-use trail to Littlehempston and Newton Abbot; and

(b) Compulsory Purchase Order for Bulliver Bridge should not be pursued as it cannot be justified.

Link to the Council meeting 23 July 2020 (minute 294):

<https://democracy.devon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=132&MId=3844&Ver=4>

\* **96**      **Dates for Future HATOC Meetings**

Please use link below for County Council Calendar of Meetings

<http://democracy.devon.gov.uk/mgCalendarMonthView.aspx?GL=1&bcr=1>

Meetings to be held at 10.30am. Please check venue in the current situation:-

2020/21:  
Friday 19 February 2021

2021/22:  
Friday 26 June 2021  
Friday 15 October 2021  
Friday 18 February 2222.

**NOTES:**

1. *Minutes should always be read in association with any Reports for a complete record.*
2. *If the meeting has been webcast, it will be available to view on the [webcasting site](#) for up to 12 months from the date of the meeting*

**DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 10.30 am and finished at 12.05 pm