

report



meeting COUNTY COUNCIL

date 22nd September 2011

agenda item number **5b**

RESPONSE TO PETITIONS PRESENTED TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL ON 30 JUNE 2011

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform Council of responses to the issues raised in petitions presented to the Chairman of the County Council at the Council meeting on 30 June 2011:
 - A. Petition to improve the traffic problems on Church Street, Southwell.
 - B. Petition against the disposal of the playing field and the land at the former Manton School site in Worksop.
 - C. Petition against the withdrawal of the Trent Barton Toton Connect Bus Service.
 - D. Petition against the withdrawal of the free school bus service for Shireoaks and Rhodesia.

A. Petition to improve the traffic problems on Church Street, Southwell

Response of the Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways

2. A petition of 923 signatures was presented to the Chairman at the 30 June 2011 meeting of the County Council by Councillor Bruce Laughton. The petition was submitted alongside comments to demonstrate public feeling and to support the proposed remedies currently being considered by the County Council to alleviate the traffic problems on Church Street which is a section of the A617 at Southwell.
3. Advisory 20mph signs were installed on 23 May 2011 to address residents' concerns about traffic speeds along Church Street. These have subsequently been replaced with larger signs in response to

comments from residents that they were not sufficiently visible. Traffic speeds will be monitored in 6 months time to consider the effectiveness of the signs.

4. In order to try and reduce the numbers of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) travelling along Church Street, signs advising HGVs of alternative routes have been erected at four appropriate locations:
 - A612/A6097 roundabout, Lowdham
 - A6097/B6386 roundabout, Oxton
 - Nottingham Road/Station Road junction, Thurgaton
 - A614 (White Post) roundabout, Farnsfield.
5. A traffic management scheme is being designed to try and address pedestrian safety concerns along Church Street. Councillor Laughton along with County Council officers attended a public meeting with residents on 10 August 2011 to discuss the draft scheme design. The comments made at the meeting are now being considered for inclusion in the scheme design, and formal consultation will be undertaken once this work has been completed.

COUNCILLOR RICHARD JACKSON
Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways

B. Petition against the disposal of the playing field and the land at the former Manton School site in Worksop

Response of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Property

6. A petition of 212 signatures was presented to the Chairman at the 30 June 2011 meeting of the County Council by Councillor Glynn Gilfoyle objecting to the plan to dispose of the playing field and land at the former Manton Primary School site.
7. At present the County Council has made no decision regarding the future of this site. All potential options are currently being examined and the views of the petitioners will be taken into consideration as part of that process. It is hoped I will be in a position to make a final decision regarding the site in early 2012 at which time the petitioners will be informed accordingly.

COUNCILLOR REG ADAIR
Cabinet Member for Finance and Property

C. Petition against the withdrawal of the Trent Barton Toton Connect Bus Service

Response of the Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways

8. A 480 signature petition was presented to the Chairman at the 30 June 2011 meeting of the County Council by Councillor Richard Jackson. The petition requests the reinstatement of the above commercial bus service which has been withdrawn by Trent Barton. The service acted as a feeder service for their Indigo route running between Derby, Beeston and Nottingham via QMC.
9. The reason given for the withdrawal of this service was “very poor” passenger numbers. Just over half of the passenger journeys were made using a concessionary travel pass which meant that the County Council was paying for these trips.
10. For the County Council to provide a replacement service would cost around £92,000 per annum, this would have to be found by withdrawing funding from other supported services.
11. If the County Council were to provide a replacement service, based on the known patronage figures, its performance management score would be at the poorest end of the scale. This would place it in the group where continued funding for the service would be questioned.
12. There is another commercial bus service that operates in this area providing direct journeys to Nottingham, QMC and Beeston. Although it does not run along all the roads previously served by the Connect bus most people in the affected area live within 500m of a stop along this alternative route.

COUNCILLOR RICHARD JACKSON
Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways

D. Petition against the withdrawal of the free school bus service for Shireoaks and Rhodesia

Response of the Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways

13. A petition of 81 signatures was presented to the Chairman of the 30 June 2011 meeting of the County Council by Councillor Sybil Fielding requesting that the County Council reconsider its decision to withdraw the above free bus service.
14. Nottinghamshire County Council has decided to put on hold the decision to withdraw free school transport until a further review of walking routes has taken place.

15. The County Council only has a statutory duty to provide free transport where there is not a suitable walking route and where the distance is greater than two miles for the under-eights and three miles for the over-eights.
16. However, the Council has decided to allow more time for consultation and review any available walking routes to make sure that they are suitable before any decision is made. This follows concerns raised by parents, schools and county councillors.
17. The review will take place over the coming months supported by a full consultation with parents and schools. In the meantime, the current free home-to-school transport arrangements will continue to be available for the start of the new school year in September.

COUNCILLOR RICHARD JACKSON
Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways

RECOMMENDATION

18. It is RECOMMENDED that the contents and proposed actions be noted and that the petitioners are informed accordingly.

Legal Services' Comments (SLB 13/09/2011)

The contents and proposed actions in this report are for noting and the Recommendation is within the remit of Council.

Background Papers Available for Inspection

None