

24 June 2024

Agenda Item:

REPORT OF INTERIM SERVICE DIRECTOR (PLACE & COMMUNITIES)

RESPONSES TO PETITIONS PRESENTED TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to recommend to the Cabinet Member (Transport & Environment) the responses to the issues raised in petitions presented to the County Council at its 21 March 2024 meeting.

Information

A. Traffic concerns in Hickling Parish (Ref:2024/05)

2. A 27-signature petition was presented to the at the 21 March 2024 meeting of the County Council, Councillor John Cottee. The petition submitted included a collection letters and responses to a resident led survey, which raised concerns with increasing traffic volumes in Hickling and requested the County Council considers traffic calming measures within the village.
3. Since the meeting of the County Council on 24 March 2024, the lead organiser of the residents' survey has confirmed that whilst they would like the County Council to consider the request for traffic calming raised by the affected group of residents, they did not intend to submit the request as a formal petition.
4. Via East Midland Ltd's Senior District Manager for Rushcliffe will continue to look into the concerns that have been raised by residents and undertake surveys and assessments as appropriate, to determine if any schemes to address the concerns raised, should be considered for inclusion in a future highways programme.

B. Flooding concerns on Watnall Road, Hucknall (Ref:2024/06)

5. An 1,788-signature petition was presented to the 21 March 2024 meeting of the County Council by Councillor Dave Shaw requesting that Watnall Road's flooding issues be resolved.
6. The B6009 Watnall Road is a main route into and out of Hucknall at its western point and is the main link between Hucknall and Watnall. The location of the flooding is at a low point and has a watercourse which is culverted and flows from north to south. The speed limit at the

location is derestricted National Speed Limit and the terminal point of the adjacent 30mph speed limit is approximately 50 metres to the north-west.

7. Historically, flooding has occurred at this location and an improvement scheme was completed in the early 2000s. More recently, small improvements were carried out to the inlet grille of the culvert allowing debris to rise with increased flow in the watercourse. Via East Midlands Ltd's Drainage Team have monitored gullies following each flooding event and ensured they are running clear.
8. Watnall Road from the roundabout junction of Lovesey Avenue and the district boundary is served by eleven road gullies. All road gullies in the vicinity have been inspected as part of the response to the winter storms. Watnall Road's gullies are cleansed every year and were last cleansed in March 2024. Gully cleansing does not require the input of Severn Trent Water.
9. Via East Midlands Ltd has worked with landowners both up and downstream of the culvert to ensure that flow is maximised and that the upstream culvert grille is kept clear of debris. Debris traps have been installed further upstream to reduce the amount of debris blocking the grille. Further footway works have been carried out to ensure that carriageway flooding is kept to a minimum. This work has not required any input from the Environment Agency. It should be noted that following the completion of these works, Watnall Road has remained open despite further winter storms.
10. Watnall Road is inspected as part of the cyclical inspection regime; safety inspections are conducted every month. Since October 2023, there have been six repairs carried out to carriageway and footway defects. Watnall Road will continue to be monitored as part of the cyclical inspection regime.
11. Via East Midlands Ltd's Safer Highways Team conduct an annual study of collisions in darkness which considers the need for additional lighting. The accident record for this location shows that there have been no reported collisions involving injury during the period 01 January 2020 to 01 December 2023. Nottinghamshire County Council prioritises sites where more than one-third of collisions happen after dark. Given the collision history at this site, there are no plans to install further lighting.
12. Flashing warning signs are not being considered as the cause of prolonged flooding and resulting road closures are being tackled through regular maintenance. Such signage would likely be routinely ignored and it is noted that drivers frequently ignored the Road Closures put in place for highway users' safety.
13. The lead petitioner will be provided with this information.

Options under consideration

14. Other options being considered are working with Highways Development Control and the Local Planning Authority to ensure that future developments upstream do not exceed existing capacity. Further consideration is being given to the installation of a live CCTV monitoring station to remotely monitor the culvert grille.

15. It is recommended that the lead petitioner is advised accordingly.

C. Petition requesting safety improvements at the junction of Derby Road (A52) and Wollaton Road (B6006) in Beeston (Ref:2024/08)

16. An 198-signature petition was presented to the 21 March 2024 meeting of the County Council by Councillor Steve Carr on behalf of local residents calling for improved safety measures at the A52 Derby Road/B6006 Wollaton Road intersection, including additional pedestrian controlled/phased lights and improved dropped kerbs for wheelchair access.

17. There have been four reported injury accidents of a slight nature reported on the A52 Derby Road, at its junction with Wollaton Road in the last 3 years, although none of these involved pedestrians.

18. The A52 Derby Road, Beeston, including its junction with Wollaton Road falls within the remit of National Highways (NH). Whilst agreements are in place that involves Via East Midlands Limited undertaking maintenance and/or remedial measures on behalf of National Highways where necessary at this location, decisions concerning improvements on its highway network are made by National Highways. Via East Midlands Limited are therefore in contact with National Highways regarding the request and will await their decision and inform the lead petitioner of the outcome once they have completed their investigations.

Options under consideration

19. National Highways have added Derby Road (A52) and Wollaton Road (B6006) junction to their walking and cycling issues register and will consider prioritising the signalled junction for future study, alongside other known issues across the Midlands.

20. National Highways will also consider any opportunities for pedestrian improvements that could potentially arise from other necessary work that may be required in the future, such as altering levels and gradients as part of essential carriageway repairs.

21. It is recommended that the lead petitioner is advised accordingly.

D. Petition requesting robust plan for dealing with surface water drainage at Bramcote Moor Estate, Bramcote (Ref:2024/07)

22. A 29-signature petition was presented to the 21 March 2024 meeting of the County Council by Councillor Steve Carr on behalf of residents of the Bramcote Moor Estate in Bramcote. The petition suggests that residents have been deeply affected by floods during Storm Babet which continues to cause distress. Concerns have been raised over future development in the area and the need for a clear plan for surface drainage before any further construction takes place.

23. Roads which have been reported to have suffered from flooding include Westray Close, Latimer Drive, Sloan Drive, and Kilburn Close. There have been no reports of internal property flooding on these roads, which are cleansed on a 3-year cycle and were last attended between August 2022 and April 2023.

24. Nottinghamshire County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) are a statutory consultee on the planning process with regards to the management of surface water for major developments. As part of the planning process, officers will assess the proposals of all major developments to ensure that surface water is managed appropriately. The lead petitioner will be informed of this.
25. Via East Midlands Ltd continues to work through and prioritise all outstanding blocked gully reports which have been highlighted since Storm Babet, and those which have been identified during routine highway inspections. Local communities and residents are encouraged to contact their local planning authority in the first instance to raise concerns regarding the implementation of future development.

Other options considered

26. Any other options are beyond the scope of Via East Midlands Ltd with regards to the approval of future development process.
27. It is recommended that the lead petitioner is advised accordingly.

E. Improve Stagecoach bus services from Farnsfield to other towns (Ref:2024/01)

28. A 454-signature petition was presented to the 21 March 2024 meeting of the County Council by Councillor Bruce Laughton. The petition requests improved bus services from Farnsfield to other towns, with reference to improving connectivity to Nottingham.
29. There were 16 further comments of which the majority related to improved services to Nottingham, but there were a few comments regarding improved connections to Mansfield in the evening and at weekends.
30. On 20 November 2023 the Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment approved improved Sherwood Arrow evening journeys between Farnsfield and Nottingham, which was requested by the petitioner.
31. The other requests for improved connection to Mansfield and Newark will be considered but with limited funding available the County Council is unable to meet every request, but the request will be logged and considered if future funding should become available.
32. It is recommended that the lead petitioner be informed accordingly.

F. Retain the tram concessionary pass (Ref:2024/09)

33. A 756-signature petition was presented to the 21 March 2024 meeting of the County Council by Councillor Gowland. The petition requests that the Council retains free travel for concessionary pass holders on the tram.
34. Due to the size of the tram concessionary fares budget, it was agreed at Transport and Environment Committee on 5 January 2022 that it would be prudent to consult on a range of options around the tram concession in the future. This included four options from retaining the current arrangements, revised arrangements to maintain access for priority groups, and partial or full withdrawal.

35. On 18 October 2023 the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment approved the draft consultation and consultation began in late 2023 for 8 weeks, ending on the 7 January 2024.
36. The Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment considered the consultation responses on 19 February 2024 and with the vast majority supporting its continuation, the Cabinet Member approved the continuation of the current tram concession for 2024/25.
37. It is recommended that the lead petitioner be informed accordingly.

G. Petition regarding safety concerns and difficulties exiting Gunthorpe, at the junction of Lowdham Road and Main Street (Ref:2024/03)

38. An 1,136-signature petition outlining safety concerns and difficulties faced by residents when attempting to leave Gunthorpe via Main Street, was presented to the 21 March 2024 meeting of the County Council by Councillor Roger Jackson. The petition suggests three potential interventions:

- 1) Construction of a mini roundabout at the junction of the A6097 and Main Street
- 2) The installation of “rest on red” signal at the above junction
- 3) The introduction of a 30mph speed limit on the A6097.

39. The County Council is aware of the difficulties faced by residents at this location and has considered the feasibility and cost of installing traffic lights previously. A petition was submitted in 2018. It was noted in the response to this petition, which was approved by the Communities and Place Committee on 7 March 2019, that:

“a traffic survey on Main Street confirms that only around 70-110 vehicles enter the A6097 from this road on average during the peak periods. With the extremely high cost of installing traffic signals, it is considered that this would offer very poor value for money given the low number of motorists that would benefit.

There are also concerns about the safety of any new signals at this location. There have been no reported injury accidents at this junction between 1 January 2015 and 30 September 2018 and it is considered that the introduction of traffic signals could result in an increase in accidents, as signals often cause heavy braking and nose-tail shunt collisions. Additionally, the Council does not support the installation of part-time signals due to concerns that drivers find them confusing causing them not to follow the normal rules of the road when the signals are not operating, and this could result in a mixture of accident types. There are not any signals operating part-time in the county.”

40. The issues referred to in the previous response have not materially changed since 2018 and, for the same reasons that part-time signals are not used, the County Council will not consider to the installation of “rest on red” traffic signals at this location.
41. However, the Council will commission a study to determine the feasibility and cost of constructing a mini-roundabout at this location. Roundabouts only operate satisfactorily in specific circumstances so the study will consider whether these conditions exist at this location and whether, if feasible, a roundabout would operate as hoped.

42. In addition, the Council will also undertake a review of the speed limit on the A6097, taking account of national guidance on the setting of local speed limits.

Other options considered

43. Some of the options requested are still under consideration but other options may be considered should:

- a. the outcome of the study to consider the introduction of a mini-roundabout at this location determine that it is not feasible and/or does not offer value for money, and
- b. the outcome of the speed limit review determine that the speed limit should not be reduced.

44. It is recommended that the lead petitioner is advised accordingly.

H. Pedestrian crossing at the top of Beacon Hill Road, Newark (Ref:2024/02)

45. An 142-signature petition was presented to the 21 March 2024 meeting of the County Council by Councillor Sam Smith. The petition requests construction of a formal pedestrian crossing on Beacon Hill Road between Lavender Way/Cannon Close and Newbury Road in Newark.

46. The County Council receives more requests for pedestrian crossings (such as puffin or zebra crossings) than it is able to fund and therefore requests are prioritised based on the number of people crossing, the volume of traffic and other relevant factors such as accident history at the proposed location so that the available funding helps the greatest number of people. For road safety reasons puffin or zebra crossings are also currently only installed where they are used by pedestrians throughout the day.

47. A pedestrian and traffic survey will therefore be undertaken to determine whether a crossing at this location could be prioritised for future funding. If this proves to be the case, the Council will carry out a study to determine the feasibility and cost of constructing a crossing and will consider it for inclusion in a future year's work programme.

Other options considered

48. The request is still under consideration but other available options may be considered following the completion of the traffic survey, should the survey determine that a formal crossing is not suitable at this location (or a resulting study identify that its construction is not feasible, or its cost prohibitive).

49. It is recommended that the lead petitioner is informed.

I. Request for a pedestrian crossing on Westdale Lane, Carlton (Ref:2024/04)

50. A 352-signature petition was presented to the 21 March 2024 meeting of the County Council by Councillor Jim Creamer requesting a pedestrian crossing on Westdale Lane East located between Glendale Close and Haddon Close, northwest of Haddon Close be considered.

51. Currently the primary school has a School Crossing Patrol (SCP) in post located on Westdale Lane East, southeast of Haddon Close, approximately 10m from the junction. The existing

SCP, which operates at the start and end of the school day, is in close proximity to the location requested by the lead petitioner, and therefore the existing provision is still seen to be sufficient to help Haddon Primary School pupils cross Westdale Lane East to access the school.

52. The County Council receives far more requests for pedestrian crossings (such as puffin or zebra crossings) than it is able to fund and therefore requests for crossings are prioritised based on the number of people crossing, the volume of traffic, and other relevant factors such as accident history at a proposed location so that the available funding helps the greatest number of people. For road safety reasons formal crossings are also currently only installed where they are used by pedestrians throughout the day. A survey was undertaken to assess the demand for a crossing on Westdale Lane East, in the vicinity of Haddon Close, in June 2022. The results of the survey showed that whilst people were crossing during school peak times, there was an insufficient number of people crossing throughout the day for the installation of a formal crossing at this location to be considered. The County Council will, however, review the request to determine if an alternative form of crossing facility maybe a suitable option for consideration.

Other options considered

53. Other options will be identified as part of the assessment to be undertaken (as referred to in paragraph 52). On completion of the assessment these will be discussed with the local County Council member.

54. It is recommended that the lead petitioner is informed.

Link to Nottinghamshire Plan/Annual Delivery Plan

55. Should the proposed actions be approved, they will help deliver the following Nottinghamshire Plan ambitions/delivery plan priorities:

- *'Improving transport and digital connections'* and more specifically:
 - Response to petition labelled E will help in the delivery of the action: *'Improve bus services'*

Other Options Considered

56. The options currently being considered are set out within Sections A to I of this report.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

57. The recommendations detailed within this report have been developed to help ensure delivery of the County Council's 'Nottinghamshire Plan 2021-31' priorities, national priorities, and local transport goals and objectives. Recommendations are based on their ability to deliver strategic objectives (including transport objectives), evidence of need (including technical analysis), feasibility, and value for money assessments.

Statutory and Policy Implications

58. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human

rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

59. There are no specific financial implication arising directly from the report.

Consultation

60. The petition has been considered. The proposed scheme detailed in this report would, if taken forward, still be subject to the necessary consultation, statutory undertakings and other issues arising from feasibility studies, detailed scheme investigation, and design; and value for money considerations. This would involve consultation and/or pro-active information provision on most schemes and the level of the public engagement will be determined/dependent on the improvements being considered. For most individual schemes statutory or non-statutory consultation would be undertaken with affected households and businesses only (i.e., households or businesses adjacent to a proposed scheme).

Public Sector Equality Duty implications

61. An equality impact assessment was undertaken on the Nottinghamshire Local Transport Plan 2011/12-2025/26 in March 2011 to ensure that the strategy and its capital programmes to deliver it met the duty. Were any of the schemes referred to above to be taken forward, equality impact assessments would be considered and undertaken as necessary on individual proposals by project managers as part of the scheme feasibility, design, and consultation carried out in the development of any highway improvements to demonstrate that they comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Implications for Residents

62. The implications for residents are set out above in each of the individual responses to the petitions presented to the County Council.

Implications for Sustainability and the Environment

63. Surveys undertaken with the public and local businesses identified reducing traffic congestion as the highest transport priority for both groups. Measures to help address congestion and address its impacts on the environment (such as improving walking facilities and bus services), and its impacts on local communities have therefore been considered as detailed within this report. The recycling of materials and aggregates is also considered when delivering highways schemes whenever possible.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) The proposed actions be approved, and the lead petitioner be informed accordingly.
- 2) The outcome of consideration by the Cabinet Member (Transport & Environment) be reported to Full Council.

Mark Walker, Interim Service Director (Place & Communities)

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

- Items A to D – Joanne Horton, Via EM Ltd Service Manager Highway Management, Tel: 0115 804 0123
- Items E to F – Pete Mathieson, Development and Partnerships Team Manager, Tel: 0115 977 4760
- Items G to I – Ellie Jaycock, Senior Local Transport Plan Officer, Tel: 0115 804 3891

Constitutional Comments (EP 04/06/2024)

64. The Cabinet Member (Transport & Environment) is the appropriate portfolio holder to consider these petitions and to report back to Full Council in relation to the same, in accordance with Section 4, Part 2, Paragraph 38 of the Constitution

Financial Comments (PA 28/05/2024)

64. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from this report. The costs associated with the tram concessionary pass as outlined in section F are met from the budget for Concessionary Fares which for 2024/25 is £10.360m.

Background Papers and Published Documents

- None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- Bramcote and Beeston North – Councillor Steve Carr
- Hucknall West – Councillor Dave Shaw
- Keyworth – Councillor John Cottee
- Muskham and Farnsfield – Councillor Bruce Laughton
- Newark East – Councillor Sam Smith
- Southwell – Councillor Roger Jackson
- West Bridgford North – Councillor Penny Gowland