

# report



meeting COUNTY COUNCIL

date 19<sup>th</sup> May 2011 agenda item number **9b**

## RESPONSE TO PETITIONS PRESENTED TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL ON 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 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 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011.
  - A. Petition requesting that yellow lines be painted and enforced on the junction of Earlswood Drive and Big Barn Lane, Mansfield
  - B. Petition regarding a Bus Stop in Bramcote
  - C. Petition requesting a Pedestrian Crossing on London Road, Retford
  - D. Petition to improve road safety in Phoenix Ward in Gedling Borough
  - E. Petition regarding the Osberton/Scofton bus service
  - F. Petition against the budget cuts made to the Mansfield Citizens Advice Bureau
  - G. Petition against the reduction in the Supporting People budget
  - H. Petition against the cuts to Social Care in the Community
  - I. Petition against the reduction in the opening hours of Kimberley Library.

**A. Petition requesting that yellow lines be painted and enforced on the junction of Earlswood Drive and Big Barn Lane, Mansfield**

Response of the Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways

2. A petition of 14 names was presented to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 meeting of the County Council by Councillor Chris Winterton and Councillor Stephen Garner. The petition requests that double yellow lines be installed on Big Barn Lane near the junction with Earlswood Drive in order to solve visibility problems created by works vans associated with a nearby construction site.

3. The County Council's Accident Investigation Unit reported that there have been no accidents at this junction since at least January 2005, which represents a very good accident record.
4. The site was inspected and parked vehicles, including works vans, were observed outside the building site. It was not felt that they were unacceptably close to the junction, although it was accepted that they were still within the view of drivers from Earlswood Drive waiting to turn. A large privately owned bush overhanging the highway is contributing to the problem.
5. It is felt that although visibility from Earlswood Drive is not ideal, it is adequate and that drivers should be able to exercise the necessary caution required to negotiate the junction safely. The parked vehicles for the ongoing construction works are a temporary problem which cannot be addressed with permanent parking restrictions.
6. It is anticipated that once the construction works are complete, the problem will naturally lessen. The overhanging bush can be trimmed to make some improvement to the visibility and this will be actioned as soon as possible.

COUNCILLOR RICHARD JACKSON  
Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways

**B. Petition regarding a Bus Stop in Bramcote**

Response of the Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways

7. A petition of 60 names was presented to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 meeting of the County Council by Councillor Heptinstall regarding the installation of two new bus stops in Bramcote.
8. The request has been considered in consultation with the bus company and it has been agreed that the bus stops should be installed. The budget has been allocated for this purpose.
9. The Transport and Travel Services team along with colleagues in the Highways Section will now determine the most suitable locations. Consultation with land owners adjacent to the new stop locations will follow. Upon successful consultation, it is hoped that the new bus stops will be installed in late May /early June 2011.

COUNCILLOR RICHARD JACKSON  
Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways

**C. Petition requesting a Pedestrian Crossing on London Road, Retford**

Response of the Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways

10. A 263 signature petition was presented to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 meeting of the County Council by Councillor Wendy Quigley. The petition expresses concern for children crossing London Road on their way to and from Bracken Lane and Thrumpton Primary Schools and the volume and speed of traffic on London Road, Retford. The petition requests the installation of a pedestrian crossing.
11. Correspondence has also been received from John Mann MP following his site meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2011 with members of the public and local County Councillor Wendy Quigley, detailing requests for a pedestrian crossing and a reduction of the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph.
12. The site in question has a School Crossing Patrol in attendance with refuges to assist. The London Road site has also met the criteria for a permanent speed interactive sign and this is currently being installed.
13. The Police have reported that there have been three road collisions near the site involving injury, in the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2006 to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2010. None of these incidents involved a pedestrian crossing the road.
14. It is proposed to carry out an assessment of the site involving a formal survey to assess the suitability for a crossing facility. The speeds of vehicles on London Road will also be assessed with reference to the national guidance on the setting of speed limits.

COUNCILLOR RICHARD JACKSON  
Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways

**D. Petition to improve road safety in Phoenix Ward in Gedling Borough**

Response of the Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways

15. Three petitions with a total of 119 signatures were presented to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 meeting of the County Council by Councillor Allen Clarke. The petitioners request that the Council improve road safety by placing double yellow lines at three locations in the Phoenix Ward of Gedling due to vehicles parking obstructively along Westdale Lane East.

16. At the current time all requests for waiting restrictions are being added to a list for implementation to be considered when resources become available. All of the locations where the petitioners have requested restrictions are already on this list.
17. The accident records at all three locations do not reveal a specified accident problem and therefore they are not considered a priority.
18. The list of sites will be monitored and reviewed and if there are any significant changes at these locations they will be assessed and prioritised accordingly.
19. The Highways section will also contact the Police to see if they are able to offer any assistance to reduce the obstructive parking.

COUNCILLOR RICHARD JACKSON  
Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways

**E. Petition regarding the Osberton/Scofton bus service**

Response of the Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways

20. A petition of 50 names was presented at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 meeting of the County Council by Councillor Gilfoyle. The signatories opposed the rerouting of the Stagecoach service 42 bus between Retford and Worksop.
21. This service was revised in January this year and no longer passes the small rural communities of Scofton and Osberton. The change was implemented to improve access to the employment areas east of Manton in Worksop, and included frequency changes benefiting travel between the two towns for education and health reasons as well as between areas of high social deprivation and job opportunities.
22. The change attracted a European grant of over £0.5M specifically for improving access to jobs, and supports the County Council priority for bus services to improve access to employment and training.
23. Stagecoach have identified that the stops no longer served generated an average of three passengers per day (on 10 buses each way), an annual total of about 1,000 trips per year from 175,000 being made on the route at that time.
24. The scale and variety of these few trips is more suitably handled by the demand responsive nature of community transport. The County Council continues to make grants towards the operation of two such schemes in the area, and has recently made a capital grant of over £40,000 to the main scheme so that it can expand its role.

25. Officers are working with Councillor Gilfoyle to identify any further solutions which can assist these users without compromising the purpose and funding for the changes made by Stagecoach to service 42.

COUNCILLOR RICHARD JACKSON  
Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways

**F. Petition against the budget cuts made to the Mansfield Citizens Advice Bureau**

Response of the Cabinet Member for Community Safety

26. A 298 signature petition was presented to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 meeting of the County Council by Councillor Wright. The petition was from local residents who opposed the cuts to the operational budget of Mansfield Citizens Advice Bureau.
27. The reductions to the provision of grant aid to Nottinghamshire CAB'S was the subject of detailed and lengthy consultation within the Big Budget Conversation.
28. The majority of responses received during that consultation process expressed concern at the reductions proposed. As a direct result of those concerns at the County Council meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> February a further £25,000 was allocated to the CAB'S for the financial year 2011/12 to assist with an orderly transition to a lower level of funding over time.
29. It should also be clarified that the funding provided by the County Council to CAB'S is a very small proportion of their overall funding. In the case of Mansfield CAB the County Council's previous grant of £57,260 represented only 9% of funding. The County Council is continuing funding the Mansfield CAB in the amount of £ 20,535
30. Whilst it is regrettable that any reductions need to be made to grant funding the County Council has taken measures to reduce the impact of reductions as far as possible. Senior officers have met on three occasions since November with representatives from CAB'S to explore new ways of working to ensure the best possible outcomes.
31. The County Council is continuing to fund Mansfield CAB, an extra £25,000 over and above what was originally proposed for CAB funding has been found to support Mansfield and other CAB's.

COUNCILLOR MICK MURPHY  
Cabinet Member for Community Safety

**G. Petition against the reduction in the Supporting People budget**

Response of the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health

32. A 70 signature petition was presented to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 meeting of the County Council by Councillor Pulk. The petition objects to funding cuts from Nottinghamshire County Council and is from residents of a sheltered housing service in Gedling. The front page of the petition says

*'Save our wardens'.*

33. The accompanying letter written by Mr B Bruton a resident of the court makes a number of points e.g.:

*'Supporting People programme states that one of their programmes is to help vulnerable people to live independently in their own accommodation. Reading through the document you do not appear to make that easy with the cuts that you propose'.*

*At one meeting we were told that 66% wanted things to stay as they are - the majority response about the wardens speaks for itself, we need them and they should be kept.*

34. Initial proposals set out to public consultation in September 2010 were to reduce the Supporting People budget from £22.5 million by £10 million, £12.5 million or £15 million. On 24<sup>th</sup> February 2011, the Council voted to make savings of £10 million in the Supporting People budget, which was the lowest savings amount of the three options for savings that were consulted on. The decision to reduce by £10 million will leave a budget of approximately £12.5 million for Supporting People services.
35. The Council has to make significant savings across all of its services over the next four years (£185 million altogether).
36. The Council undertook a second round of consultation on the Supporting People savings proposals, which closed on 28<sup>th</sup> March. The detailed proposals were based on a set of agreed principles.
37. The proposals for older people's services are to replace current sheltered housing and community alarm services with a short term floating support service. This new service will enable vulnerable and isolated older people who are owner occupiers or living in privately rented housing to access housing related support as well as those living in local authority or other social housing.

38. The new service would be targeted at those in most need of support as opposed to the existing service where support is ineffectively targeted. The new service will also coordinate volunteers to provide befriending services and community and social activities. As part of the overall strategy the County Council is developing its Outreach Extra Care developments across the County following the success of the pilot in Bassetlaw.
39. The budget will retain 43% of the existing funding for these services.
40. A report informing the Council of the responses to the second phase of the consultation on savings in the Supporting People Budget will be considered at a future meeting of the County Council.

COUNCILLOR KEVIN ROSTANCE  
Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health

#### **H. Petition against the cuts to Social Care in the Community**

##### Response of the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health

41. A 259 signature petition was presented to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 meeting of the County Council by Councillor Pulk which objects to funding cuts from Nottinghamshire County Council. The front page of the petition says:

*'Petition Against the cuts to social care in the community'.*

42. Initial proposals set out to public consultation in September 2010 were to reduce the Supporting People budget from £22.5 million by £10 million, £12.5 million or £15 million. On 24<sup>th</sup> February 2011, the Council voted to make savings of £10 million in the Supporting People budget, which was the lowest savings amount of the three options for savings that were consulted on. The decision to reduce by £10 million will leave a budget of approximately £12.5 million for Supporting People services.
43. The Council has to make significant savings across all of its services over the next four years (£185 million altogether). The level of continued funding support set out is a demonstration of the Council's continuing commitment to support vulnerable people and prevent homelessness. A programme of £12.5 million is still a sizable programme and will still be able to offer support to a large number of individuals across the county.
44. The size and scale of the savings that are required inevitably mean that some of the programmes of investment that the authority has made in preventative services must be curtailed or reduced, since

there are not enough 'back office' and 'value for money' savings to be made in relation to the overall savings target to be achieved.

45. The Council undertook a second round of consultation on the Supporting People savings proposals, which closed on 28<sup>th</sup> March. The detailed proposals were based on a set of agreed principles and aimed to minimise the number of service closures for example all core homelessness accommodation services will be retained along with all four women's refuges in the county.
46. A report informing the Council of the responses to the second phase of the consultation on savings in the Supporting People Budget will be considered at a future meeting of the County Council.

COUNCILLOR KEVIN ROSTANCE  
Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health

I. **Petition against the reduction in the opening hours of Kimberley Library.**

Response of the Cabinet Member for Culture & Community

47. A 393 signature petition was presented to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 meeting of the County Council by Councillor Pettengell. The petition was regarding the proposed cuts being made in the opening hours of Kimberley Library.
48. The changes to the library service budget were agreed by the County Council meeting held on the 24<sup>th</sup> February 2011.
49. The Council is committed to the provision of a comprehensive library service at the heart of every community. This is balanced against the need to make savings to reinvest in services like child protection and services for older people. Our policy is not to close any library as this would permanently withdraw access to the important community service libraries provide today. The reduction in opening hours at Kimberley Library is in line with reductions across the library network.
50. A public consultation was undertaken in relation to opening hour options at all 60 libraries including Kimberley to ensure library opening hours fit the needs of customers and the local community. Revised opening hours were implemented on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2011.

COUNCILLOR JOHN COTTEE  
Cabinet Member for Culture & Community



## **RECOMMENDATION**

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

### **Legal Services' Comments**

The contents and proposed actions in this report are for noting and the Recommendation is within the remit of Council. (SLB 06/05/2011)

### **Background Papers Available for Inspection**

None