

BRANDWOOD & KINGS HEATH WARD MEETING NOTES

WARD: Brandwood & Kings Heath	DATE: 27 November 2019
VENUE: Kings Heath Community Centre, Heathfield Road B14 7DB	START/FINISH TIMES: 7pm – 9pm
COUNCILLORS: Lisa Trickett & Mike Leddy	NOs OF ATTENDEES: 70
OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE: Rachel Evans & Neville Moody, West Midlands Trains Executive John Myatt, Transport Planning Manager Sajid Khan, Local Engineer Shabana Everton, Project Manager Kay Thomas, Community Governance Manager	

MATTERS DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING:

1. The New Railway Stations at Hazelwell, Kings Heath & Moseley

Rachel Evans & Neville Moody gave an update on the progress of the stations and answered residents questions as follows;

- Engagement with residents had been ongoing for the past 12 months & thanks were extended to those who had already commented. The top 3 issues so far had been a) parking b) availability of local junctions to cope with additional drop off & pick up traffic c) station facilities eg staffing
- The parking and junction concerns were being addressed with BCC
- Planning applications for Kings Heath & Hazelwell stations had been submitted and were due to go before Planning Committee in December/January.
- Moseley station was delayed due to engineering issues associated with the Victorian tunnel.
- The ground investigations & ecological studies had been undertaken and the results were on the planning portal

- Design details and specifications were shared with the meeting
- Construction was planned to start in January 2021 with completion set for end of 2021
- In response to questions the meeting was advised that;
- **Parking** – BCC had agreed no parking at the stations to discourage people from driving to the stations. The transport statement was on the portal and included a TRO to address the real concerns of residents local to the stations in respect of on street parking. Should residents want a different approach West Midlands Rail would work with BCC on an alternative. In respect of enforcement a targeted approach would be taken if complaints were received as the concerns regarding stations being a hot spot for parking issues was acknowledged. Monitoring & a review would be undertaken after the stations opened. Councillor Trickett undertook to share the plans via social media so that the extent of the TRO could be seen. She added that this was an outline planning application and so councillors would work with residents and businesses to ensure that the scheme worked for the benefit of local residents.
- **Bus service integration** – discussions had been had with the bus operators but services in the area were already very regular.
- **Opening of the stations** – there had been some challenges regarding timetabling but these had been worked through to enable a half hourly service to run from New Street to all 3 stations up to Kings Norton and West Midlands Rail was confident that this would go ahead.

2. Avenue Road/Abbotts Road Highway Scheme

Councillor Trickett said that residents had raised concerns over the scheme originally put forward as a solution by BCC and therefore views had been taken on board and alternative options drawn up. Sajid Khan ran through the scheme and pointed out that traffic flow and impact on other roads in the area were a consideration. Councillor Trickett advised that a consultant was being appointed to work on a proposal having regard to the views expressed by residents and that they would be working with local residents and businesses to come up with the most appropriate scheme. The plans on display were a rough outline suggestion.

Residents commented that the volume of traffic on Abbotts/Avenue Roads was rat-running from the High Street & therefore removing the hold ups there would discourage through traffic. Businesses expressed reservations regarding the removal of parking spaces on the High Street. The budget for the scheme was queried and the meeting was advised that scope was limited due to budget and the focus

needed to be around how many accidents could be saved.

Councillor Trickett said that the aspiration was for less traffic and a more pedestrian friendly area and therefore creating a scheme linking this idea with the train stations, Abbots Road and the High Street could be achieved but it would take time.

3. Parking Space Pilot for the High Street

Councillor Trickett explained the desire to make the High Street more user- friendly, improve air quality while being sensitive to business needs that had come from discussions on the ward plan. A test had therefore been developed to remove a number of spaces (plans showed the locations) testing air quality 12 weeks prior to them being taken out and then again 12 weeks after removal. The parking ban would last for 18 months and barriers would be put in place to prevent parking. A steering group will be set up comprising business representatives, BID, residents & councillors to take the plan forward, with help from TAWS & SUSTRANS. There were also thoughts about the quality of the public realm on the High Street and it was hoped to improve this in conjunction with the opening of the station to encourage more people to use the High Street to shop, eat and drink.

On the question of enforcement, the meeting was advised that photographs of illegal parking could be sent to the BCC website for action and to direct enforcement. The experiment was also about changing behaviour, promoting the High Street & helping businesses. Other measures to further improve the High Street could be considered in the future.

The meeting then moved into break- out sessions to discuss in more detail, with officers the 3 topics above and study the plans and drawings. Suggestion sheets for each were circulated, completed by residents and returned to Councillor Leddy to assist with the projects going forward.

Avenue & Abbots Road Junction Scheme

Shabana Everton explained that she was in the process of appointing a consultant to draw up a scheme taking into account the views from residents and the discussion at this meeting. Sajid referred to the amount of feedback received from residents already, the main points being no-entry from Vicarage Road; pedestrian crossings on Vicarage Road; pedestrian refuges; blocking off Abbots Road. Sajid explained that careful consideration needed to be given to ensure that what was agreed did not increase traffic in neighbouring roads & allowed residents access to their homes.

Residents then made the following suggestions;

- Open up the right turn off Vicarage Road onto the High Street which in turn might deter people from driving down the High Street if there were queues at the lights. Sajid said that traffic lights would be affected by capacity and more traffic would create queues but the consultant could look at capacity, increasing the length of the turning lane etc.
- Traffic should not be directed off the High Street into residential roads. Other junctions similar to the Vicarage Road/High Street had right turns.
- Measures needed to stop traffic turning into All Saints Road
- Vicarage Road was a residential road and therefore all of the traffic should not be directed along it
- The narrower residential roads were more affected by heavy traffic
- Use a consultant that specialised in traffic reduction
- The proposal should not be driven by traffic flow but by the quality of life for the residents living in the affected roads – the consultant needed to start at that point and that should be the brief provided.
- It was acknowledged that the objective was junction safety and that the consultant would present a scheme based on this but it was requested that a number of options be drawn up and brought back to residents so that the ‘bigger picture’ could be shared and an informed decision reached. Shabana hoped there would be 3 options to consult residents and come up with the best option.
- The accident rate at Hazelhurst/Howard/All Saints Roads should also be taken into account and if solutions found for those junctions it would help the situation in the area as a whole.
- An assurance was sought that nothing from the original proposal would be brought forward.
- The volume of traffic was the issue but the chosen scheme should not be one that created a more efficient rat-run. Speed bumps or table tops at the junctions had been suggested but residents told that as it was a blue route they could not be installed, however Harborne Road was a blue route and speed bumps had been proposed. The emergency services were not aware of the blue route policy & WMFS welcomed table tops as they slowed down traffic. Sajid referred to the policy which had been agreed in 2005 and undertook to forward a copy to the resident, adding that there could be consultation with the emergency services and if in agreement table tops at junctions could be a consideration.
- Discussion at the meeting had been about changing behaviour and reducing cars and this scheme might be a good place to begin that

change.

Councillor Leddy said that all points would be taken into account and passed onto the consultant and then options would come back to residents for consideration

Councillors (s) Signed:

Councillor(s) Name(s) (please print):